PLAYMETER Magazine

VOLUME 24, No. 1 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY JANUARY 1998

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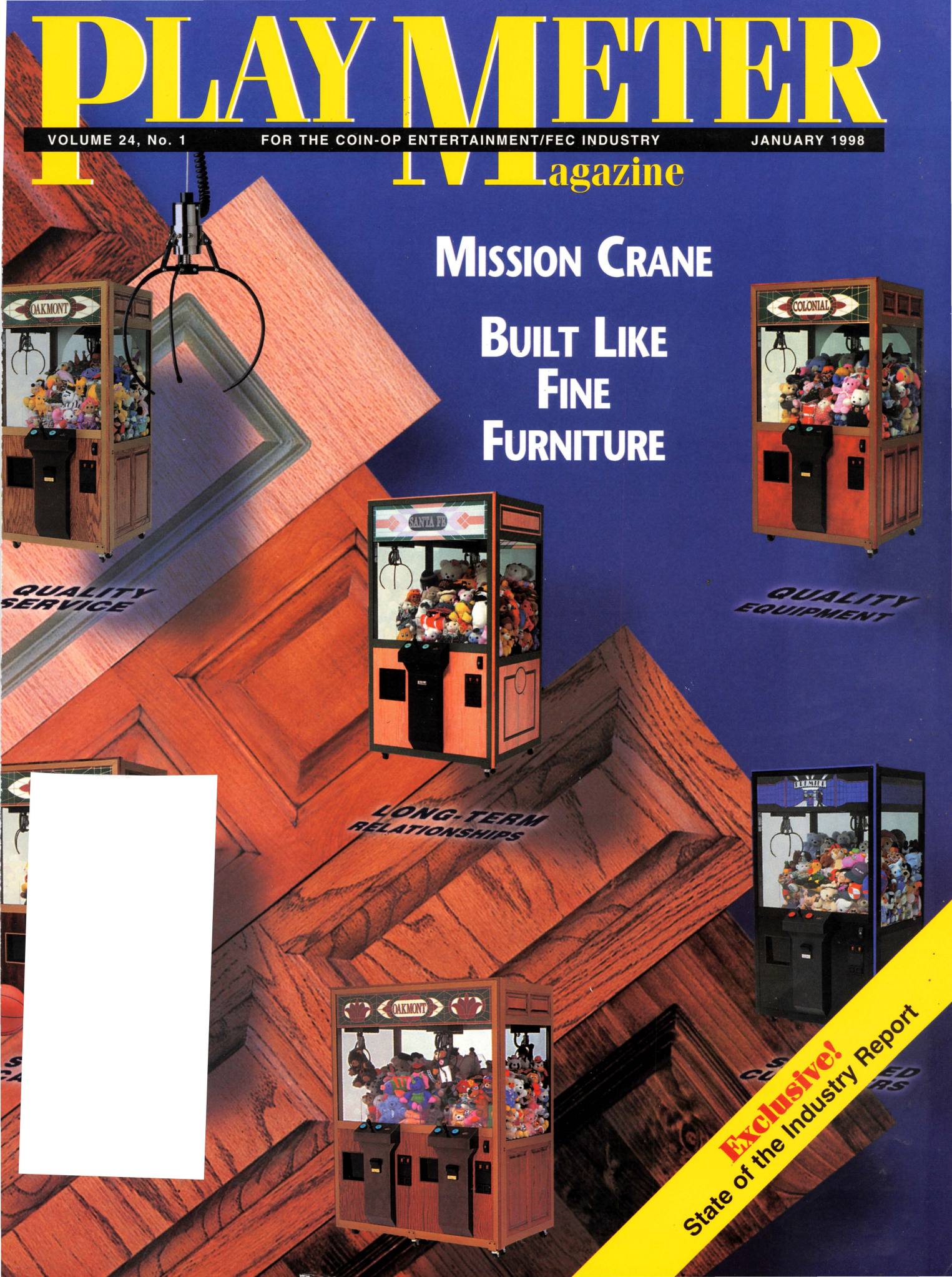

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Lost World Deluxe	$650	$600	$575	$530	$14,130	$5,000
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News BULLETIN

ASSOCIATIONS ADOPT VIDEO CONTENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

The coin machine industry's three major trade associations—AMOA, AAMA, and IAFEC—adopted an educational program last month designed to help implement a parental advisory system for video game content. AAMA executive director Bob Fay said one of the main thrusts of the initiative will be a poster explaining the system; the poster will be free, while supplies last, to all locations.

Samples of the poster, which will be available through the respective associations, will be sent to all members of AMOA, AAMA, and IAFEC. The posters will also be advertised in major industry trade publications. "This is a serious issue and it doesn't cost operators anything," said Fay. "If we don't do something, we risk Congressional action."

Other components of the educational plan include: parental warnings in the artwork of all new games or control panel for machines with 50-inch monitors, an information pack describing the advisory system mailed to operators, and a pilot program that will study the effects of isolating games that feature violent content.

The test will be conducted by AMOA officers Don Hesch, Jim Stansfield, and Frank Seninsky, as well as two Namco Aladdin's Castle locations and two IAFEC member locations. Results will be submitted to Congress in September. A meeting has been scheduled for March to help put this pilot program into place. The test is expected to run through April and May and will monitor player response to the isolated games.

ACCLAIM TO INTRODUCE PC-BASED VIDEO GAME SYSTEM

Acclaim Coin-Op will show the first four games for its new PC-based game platform at this month's ATEI show in London; the games will also be exhibited in March at the ASI show in Las Vegas. They include two driving games, a shooting game, and a military strategy game.

While the game platform will be based on Intel's Open Arcade Architecture specification and utilize Quantum3D's graphics technology, Acclaim's Leon Deith said special security locks built into the system will limit the software the system will support. Only games put out by Acclaim will run on the platform. The idea, according to Deith, is that operators are guaranteed quality content from Acclaim because it already has firmly established relationships with both the coin-op industry as a video game manufacturer and the software development community as a major consumer game publisher.

"It's a Neo Geo system for the next generation," Deith told Play Meter. "We will be the only publisher. We will implement the security locks to protect our developers." Nine development firms, including five "household names," have signed on to the project, Deith added.

OPEN ARCADE FORUM PRODUCES SHOWCASES BUILDING BLOCKS

The Dec. 2 meeting of the Intel-sponsored Open Arcade Architecture Forum showcased several building blocks designed to aid the implementation of a PC-based video game platform including the formation of a new working group that will examine and expand current input device technology. Jointly chaired by Microsoft and Intel, the group will look at the special needs of arcade input devices such as coin mechs and bill acceptors as well as the challenge of developing game software that will universally recognize joysticks, guns, or steering wheels. Microsoft is expected to use the information for addressing the arcade market in its 1999 version of DirectInput API, the game developer's tool kit for writing software.

New members of the forum include Acclaim Entertainment, Compaq, Electronic Arts, and Microsoft. Intel's arcade point man Albert Teng said there are seven companies currently shipping or testing PC-based arcade systems. They include: Evans & Sutherland, HanaHo ArcadePC, Interactive Light, LBE Systems, LBE Technologies, Mango Grits, and the Vivid Group. The OAAF is scheduled to meet three times this year: March (ASI), May (Computer Game Developer's Conference), and September (AMOA).

IMMERSIA PRESENTS TOOL KIT TO MAXIMIZE EARNINGS

Immersia, Interactive Light's software development subsidiary, presented a new software tool kit at last month's meeting of the Open Arcade Architecture Forum designed to optimize game earnings for locations. According to Immersia's Joseph Deutsch, the software will monitor game play, for instance scoring, and then re-adjust based on the information gathered. Using the example of scoring, Deutsch said that a game which allowed players to quickly or easily reach the highest possible score would then increase in difficulty. "This is a very simple example of what our tool kit can do in terms of game earnings," he explained. "We have more than 20 different tools for many other coin-op related issues."

KONAMI TO RELEASE *BEAT MANIA* WITH NEW NAME

Konami's unique music game *Beat Mania* will be re-titled *Hip Hop Mania* when it is released in the United States mar-

News BULLETIN

ket. That decision was made after the company recently completed a market survey. The game was first shown in the United States at IAAPA `97.

Hip Hop Mania provides players the chance to be a DJ. Working with a keyboard and turntable, the player keeps pace with the notes on the screen in order to complete different songs. *Hip Hop Mania* features different song categories, such as Hip Hop, Reggae, Soul, House, and Rave, to name a few. The test was conducted at Disney's Tomorrowland arcade, where the game reportedly attracted considerable attention due to its unique theme and fun game play. *Hip Hop Mania* will be shown again this month at the Nightclub & Bar Show in Las Vegas. For further information, please contact Konami of America, (847) 215-5100.

P & P TECHNOLOGIES TO ROLL OUT JUKEBOX NATIONALLY

P & P Technologies is planning to release a wall-mount version of its *Regatta* jukebox, and the company's Ed Pellegrini says that will serve as a catalyst for the units' growing popularity. "As soon as we get the wall box finished, we are going to go national with the jukebox," he said. Close to 700 units are on location in the Chicago area.

In addition to jukebox production and sales, the company responsible for the hit game *Police Trainer* is currently working on two new videos, which are both gun games; a puzzle game; and a classic remake named *Bozo's Grand Prize II* that offers a two-player feature.

APBI, SNK SETTLE PHOTO STICKER PATENT SUIT

American Photo Booth Inc.(APBI) announced a settlement last month in its patent infringement lawsuit against SNK Corp. of Japan and its subsidiary SNK Corp. of America. According to an official statement from APBI, SNK has signed a consent decree regarding the patent issue and agreed to pay APBI a "significant amount" of money and sign a non-exclusive license and settlement agreement.

The agreement reportedly calls for SNK to pay APBI royalties on all past and future revenues from SNK photo sticker machines sold, operated in, or exported from the United States. It does not allow SNK to use APBI's patented photo sticker technology. "We feel everybody wins in this situation," said APBI's president and CEO Sam Attenberg. "SNK is allowed to retain its outlets while APBI protects its patent."

ATLUS JOINS THE LEGAL FRAY OVER PHOTO STICKER UNITS

Atlus Dream Entertainment Co. has filed a lawsuit for patent infringement and related claims against American Photo Booths Inc. (APBI), SNK Corp. of America, and SNK Corp. of Japan, in federal district court in California.

The lawsuit reportedly involves the key technology behind Atlus' *Print Club* interactive photo booth that takes a video image of the customer and then digitally combines it with a pre-stored background or object chosen by the customer from the photo booth's computer memory. Multiple copies of the digitally combined image are printed out on a sheet of stickers.

Atlus claims it acquired the patent to this cutting-edge technology through an exclusive license agreement with ImageWare Software, Inc. "This patent is the engine that makes these photo booths possible," said Yukuo Takenaka, Atlus' co-chairman. The lawsuit seeks an injunction restraining APBI and SNK from manufacturing, selling, leasing, or distributing their photo booths, as well as substantial monetary damages.

NEWS BRIEFS

☛ Mid City Distributing has moved to a new 16,000-square-foot facility located a few blocks from its original location. The new address is 2451 St. Mary's Ave., Omaha, NE 68105. Phone and fax remain the same.

☛ The Computer Game Developers' Conference is holding another one-day gathering Jan. 30 in Austin, Texas. The CGDC Mini Event will include sessions sponsored by the National Amusement Network Inc. (NANI) on developing games for the Public PC with DirectArcade, the developer tool kit put out by Microsoft for the arcade.

☛ The Satellite Bingo Network, based in Tempe, Ariz., has announced plans to use satellite technology to link a high-stakes daily bingo game in Chandler, Ariz., to Indian bingo halls across the country. ▲

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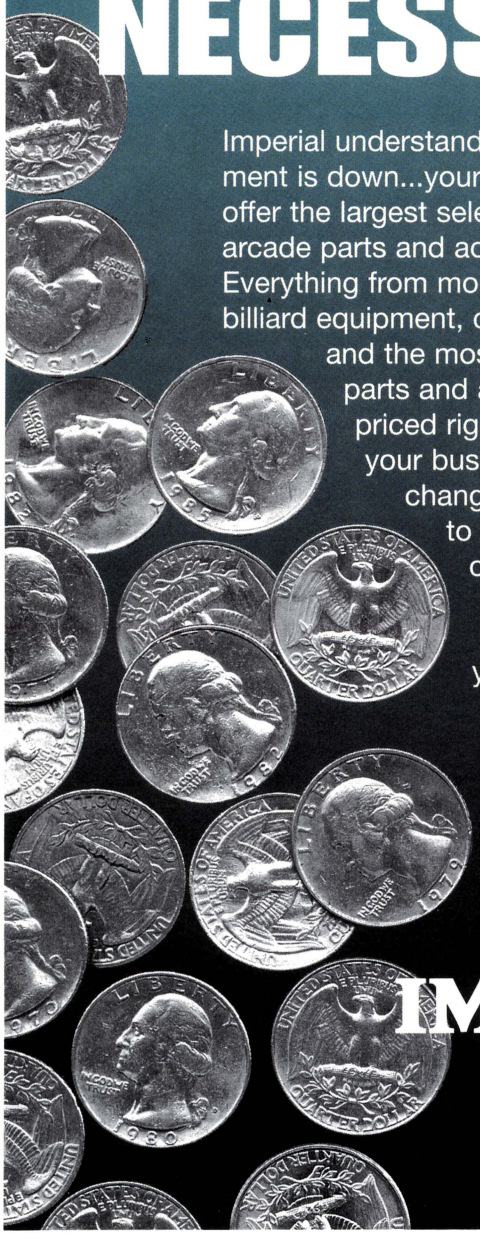

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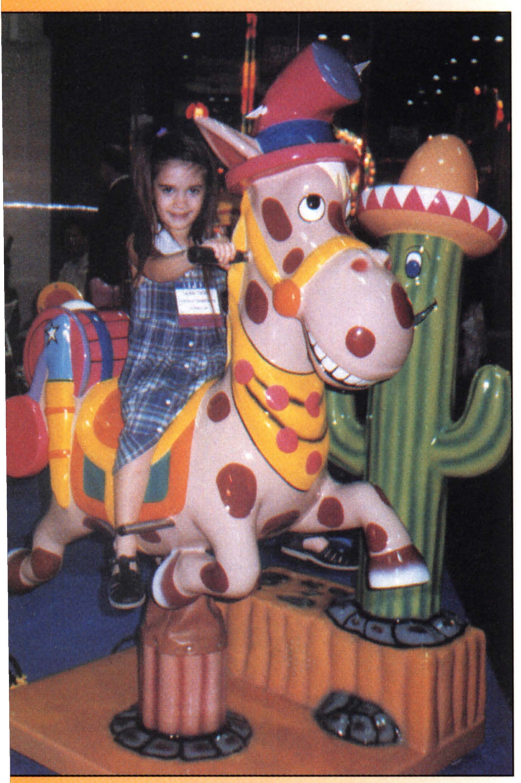

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COVER

Mission Crane has re-invigorated the skill crane market with its upscale models that feature solid-wood exteriors and quality interiors. The company prides itself on an operator program that includes technical training and prize merchandise as part of the package. Models pictured: *Oakmont* (single), *Colonial*, *Santa Fe*, *Frontier*, *Oakmont* (double), and *Premier*.

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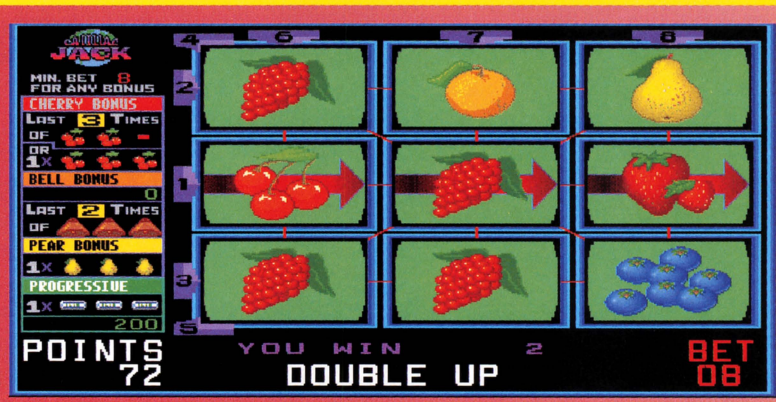

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FROM THE **EDITOR**

A recipe for *success*

I really can't explain my fascination for those cooking shows where chefs from all over the world demonstrate how to cook things you know in your heart you'll never try. But nonetheless, I flip to one occasionally and dream of one day making something my family will never forget.

Actually, I did just that recently, but it wasn't exactly how I envisioned it. I saw a famous chef making banana bread and thought that it couldn't be that difficult. In fact, Bonnie (Theard, managing editor) brings banana bread to work quite often (also pumpkin bread, coffee cake, etc.) so I guess I got a little carried away with my talents or what I thought they should be.

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

I wrote down the ingredients, preheated the oven, and was already counting the praises before the eggs were cracked. OK, I don't have really ripe bananas, but I'll just mash these green ones. Can't be THAT much difference. Uh, oh. No buttermilk. But no problem, because I remember reading that you can substitute a tablespoon of vinegar in whole milk for the same results. Skim milk will probably be OK, but was that cider, salad, or white vinegar?

Now let's see. This is going pretty well, but I don't have the type of flour the recipe calls for but I do have regular flour. After all, flour is flour is flour. Gee, this calls for an awfully lot of sugar. I can't see a single reason why I can't go with Sweet N' Low instead for that low-cal feel.

It's all mixed and ready for the loaf pan. Wait, who has loaf pans just sitting around the house? But a square glass dish looks inviting. I pop it in the oven, wait the allotted 60 minutes and viola! It looks tasty even though it's a little past "golden" brown. Well, looks aren't everything. This turned out to be the most foul-tasting concoction I've ever encountered. It's going straight in the garbage can. And you know what? I'm never using that recipe again!

The bananas and buttermilk may not strike a cord, but how about getting valuable advice about opening and operating a first-class FEC or the like? There is a certain recipe to follow in order to offer up the location you anticipate. Perhaps one such consideration is to hire the best people, train them properly, and be fair. One company took a look at their bottom line and saw a way to cut costs by hiring "cheaper" people. They reasoned that a warm body helping customers is a warm body helping customers no matter what they're paid. Right? And what's this about training? Just tell them what to do!

Consultants who offer their expertise must feel like the banana bread recipe chef would have felt if he'd seen what an abomination I made of his creation. For instance, one consultant told me he recommended a demographic study to a client before he made a costly investment. The advice fell on deaf ears since it "was too expensive." The client, willing to spend thousands, wasn't willing to heed valuable advice. Then there's the advice given to another would-be LBE owner: plan enough capital to see you through until the location becomes established. "But I'll be making so much money once I'm open! Then I'll just use those profits for whatever I need."

And the sensible, logical warnings about budgeting enough for updating equipment. "I don't understand why my customers are not coming back," noted one owner as he straightened the "out of order" sign on yet another old game.

"There's plenty for everyone to do. Why aren't I busier on weekends?" another lamented never considering investing in top-of-the-line redemption merchandise. Kids only need so many spider rings. In fact, this client balked at offering prizes of any form because he thought he was simply throwing away his profit.

I think you get the point. There's a right way to do things and there's a wrong way. One way you get banana bread and compliments; the other way you get a full garbage can and maybe a lesson learned. ▲

VIDEO KITS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	NFL Blitz *(Midway)*	8.93	57	25.77
2.	Tekken 3 *(Namco)*	8.39	432	58.90
3.	Golden Tee '97 *(Incred. Tech..)*	8.24	313	52.76
4.	Golden Tee 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech)*	7.85	1168	47.85
5.	Area 51 *(Atari)*	7.80	1278	68.71
6.	Police Trainer *(P&P)*	7.53	359	56.44
7.	Marvel Heroes vs SF *(Capcom)*	6.95	120	36.20
8.	Point Blank *(Namco)*	6.94	627	10.43
9.	Strikers 1945 Part 2 *(Worldwide)*	6.92	19	7.36
10.	Tournament Solitaire *(Dynamo)*	6.82	628	10.43
11.	World Class Bowling *(Incred. Tech.)*	6.53	335	20.86
12.	X-Men vs. Street Fighter *(Capcom)*	6.40	320	46.01
13.	Die Hard Arcade *(Sega)*	6.39	417	41.10
14.	Raiden Fighters *(Fabtek)*	6.34	107	17.79
15.	Strikers 1945 *(Worldwide)*	6.31	150	22.09
16.	Tekken 2 *(Namco)*	6.22	1037	42.33
17.	Super Puzzle Fighter II *(Capcom)*	6.17	53	7.36
18.	Street Fighter EX *(Capcom)*	6.11	2	11.04
19.	Raiden II *(Fabtek)*	6.08	785	31.90
20.	19XX *(Capcom)*	6.00	95	7.98
21.	Mace: Dark Age *(Atari)*	5.96	454	16.56
22.	Lethal Enforcers *(Konami)*	5.93	1618	53.99
23.	Bust-A-Move Again *(Taito)*	5.93	503	8.59
24.	Maximum Hangtime *(Midway)*	5.91	45	28.83
25.	Metal Slug *(SNK)*	5.91	418	41.72
26.	Three *(Capcom)*	5.90	89	19.02
27.	Great 1000 Mile Rally 2 *(Kaneko)*	5.88	44	9.82
28.	Marvel Super Heroes *(Capcom)*	5.81	382	41.10
29.	Bust-A-Move *(SNK)*	5.80	483	42.94
30.	D&D Shadow Over Mystara *(Capcom)*	5.79	201	8.59

COUNTERTOPS

1.	Megatouch XL *(Merit)*	8.84	457	39.26
2.	Megatouch 5 *(Merit)*	8.35	157	24.54
3.	Megatouch Tournament *(Merit)*	8.08	611	7.98
4.	Megatouch IV *(Merit)*	7.66	1005	38.04
5.	Touchmaster *(Williams)*	7.21	571	17.18
6.	Megatouch *(Merit)*	6.91	961	19.63
7.	Magical Touch 3 *(Micro)*	6.88	82	9.82

CLASSIC VIDEOS

1.	Out Run *(Sega)*	6.22	51	39.88
2.	Pole Position *(Atari)*	5.81	*	42.33
3.	Ms. Pac-Man *(Bally/Midway)*	5.70	*	73.01
4.	Galaga *(Bally/Midway)*	5.59	*	57.67
5.	Raiden *(Fabtek)*	5.33	*	25.77
6.	Centipede *(Atari)*	5.17	*	42.33

VIDEO DEDICATED

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	House of the Dead *(Sega)*	8.85	351	23.93
2.	Tourn. 3D Golf *(Incred. Tech.)*	8.08	489	31.90
3.	Maximum Force *(Atari)*	7.85	378	50.31
4.	Gun Blade NY *(Sega)*	7.76	705	12.88
5.	Mortal Kombat 4 *(Midway)*	7.32	121	38.65
6.	Time Crisis *(Namco)*	7.24	938	22.70
7.	Virtua Cop 2 *(Sega)*	7.00	887	16.56
8.	Solitaire Challenge *(Dynamo)*	6.79	1432	17.18
9.	Virtual On *(Sega)*	6.32	129	15.34
10.	Virtua Fighter 3 *(Sega)*	6.29	154	12.88
11.	Rampage World Tour *(Midway)*	5.81	76	22.09
12.	Virtua Fighter 2 *(Sega)*	5.79	930	23.93
13.	Killer Instinct 2 *(Midway)*	5.45	305	40.49
14.	Run and Gun 2 *(Konami)*	5.39	72	23.31

VIDEO SIMULATORS

1.	Top Skater *(Sega)*	9.46	298	14.72
2.	The Lost World: J. Park *(Sega)*	9.35	59	10.43
3.	San Francisco Rush: Rock *(Atari)*	9.05	58	12.27
4.	Cruis'n World *(Midway)*	8.63	700	56.44
5.	Off Road Challenge *(Midway)*	8.56	159	23.93
6.	Home Run Derby *(ICE)*	8.31	264	7.98
7.	San Francisco Rush *(Atari)*	8.19	609	46.01
8.	Alpine Racer 2 *(Namco)*	7.93	495	25.15
9.	Daytona USA *(Sega)*	7.92	2271	44.79
10.	Cruis'n USA *(Midway)*	7.85	2119	59.51
11.	Wave Runner *(Sega)*	7.84	436	11.66
12.	Daytona USA Limited *(Sega)*	7.58	223	7.36
13.	Sega Super GT *(Sega)*	7.47	240	11.66
14.	Wave Shark *(Konami)*	7.18	200	6.75
15.	Alpine Racer *(Namco)*	6.96	1198	15.95
16.	Aqua Jet *(Namco)*	6.93	389	8.59
17.	Alpine Surfer *(Namco)*	6.86	434	8.59
18.	Tokyo Wars *(Namco)*	6.81	276	9.82
19.	Manx TT *(Sega)*	6.60	583	18.40
20.	Suzuka 8 Hours 2 *(Namco)*	6.58	1534	22.09
21.	Cyber Cycles *(Namco)*	6.52	929	14.11
22.	Lucky & Wild *(Namco)*	6.29	1346	12.88
23.	Winding Heat *(Konami)*	6.25	184	7.36
24.	OutRunners *(Sega)*	5.96	1774	15.34
25.	Ridge Racer 2 *(Namco)*	5.89	468	11.04

PINBALLS

1.	Medieval Madness *(Williams)*	8.50	211	30.67
2.	Attack From Mars *(Bally)*	7.89	993	32.52
3.	The Addams Family *(Bally)*	7.16	3418	50.92
4.	Scared Stiff *(Bally)*	7.14	619	26.38
5.	Theatre of Magic *(Bally)*	6.97	1257	41.10
6.	Independence Day *(Sega)*	6.86	249	12.88
7.	Cirqus Voltaire *(Bally)*	6.71	11	8.59
8.	Junk Yard *(Williams)*	6.65	271	20.86
9.	The Lost World *(Sega)*	6.50	73	15.95
10.	Star Trek: TNG *(Williams)*	6.47	1715	40.49
11.	Star Wars Trilogy *(Sega)*	6.42	160	19.02
12.	Arabian Nights *(Williams)*	6.39	486	20.25
13.	World Cup Soccer *(Bally)*	6.26	1055	38.04
14.	Twister *(Sega)*	6.13	300	14.11
15.	Road Show *(Williams)*	6.13	725	24.54

REDEMPTION

ALLEY BOWLERS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	ICE Ball *(ICE)*	7.23	611	7.98
2.	Skee-Ball Too! *(Skee-Ball)*	7.10	479	6.13
3.	Smartball *(Smart)*	6.94	326	10.43
4.	Skee-Ball Lightning *(Skee-Ball)*	6.80	931	9.20
5.	Skee-Ball *(Skee-Ball)*	6.67	692	22.09

SPORTS GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Full Court Frenzy *(ICE)*	7.28	394	19.63
2.	Super Shot *(Skee-Ball)*	7.00	678	11.66
3.	Full Court Fever *(ICE)*	6.86	649	13.50
4.	Hoop Shot *(ICE)*	6.64	194	6.75
5.	Arm Champs *(Jaleco)*	6.50	232	6.13
6.	Shoot to Win *(Smart)*	6.34	569	21.47
7.	Hoop It Up *(Atari)*	6.28	927	24.54
8.	UB-QB Football *(Skee-Ball)*	5.94	112	21.47
9.	Putting Challenge II *(G.L. Tech.)*	5.62	51	7.98
10.	Slugfest *(Williams)*	5.57	5	21.47

SINGLE CRANES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Rainbow *(Rainbow)*	8.45	914	6.75
2.	Classic Watch Crane *(Smart)*	7.65	699	10.43
3.	Clean Sweep *(Smart)*	7.35	924	39.88
4.	Hollywood Crane *(Maxwell)*	6.72	123	11.04
5.	Big Choice *(Fun Merchants)*	6.59	675	19.63
6.	Jumbo Crane *(Grayhound)*	6.57	671	8.59
7.	Candy Crane *(Smart)*	6.50	450	35.58
8.	Skill Crane *(Grayhound)*	6.20	369	12.27

CHILD-SIZE GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Smart Toss Em *(Smart)*	6.78	571	5.52
2.	Bozo Basketball *(Design Plus)*	6.69	89	7.98
3.	Shoot To Win! Jr. *(Smart)*	6.50	622	9.82
4.	Hightops *(Skee-Ball)*	6.00	124	6.13
5.	Feed Big Bertha *(Smart)*	5.93	276	17.18
6.	Skee-Toss B.C. *(Skee-Ball)*	5.75	6	9.82

ROLL DOWNS

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Spin To Win *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.83	804	17.79
2.	Jungle Rama *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.10	298	6.13
3.	Clown Roll Down *(Bay Tek)*	5.76	156	10.43

NOVELTY

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Cyclone *(ICE)*	9.04	1461	42.33
2.	Cyclone Jr. *(ICE)*	8.45	795	6.75
3.	Surfin' Safari *(5 Star)*	7.91	268	6.75
4.	Dinoscore *(Planet Earth)*	7.83	1236	21.47
5.	Treasure Falls *(Planet Earth)*	7.65	768	12.27
6.	Colorama *(Bromley)*	7.64	1058	8.59
7.	Solar Spin *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.64	511	6.75
8.	Round 'n Round *(Astro)*	7.42	844	7.36
9.	Prize Zone *(Lazer-Tron)*	7.33	200	9.20
10.	Dump the Ump *(ICE)*	6.13	100	9.82
11.	Simple Simon *(Sammy USA)*	5.82	90	6.75
12.	Pop-A-Ball *(Coastal)*	5.68	84	15.34
13.	Pop-A-Tac-Toe *(Coastal)*	5.60	46	6.13
14.	Hop-A-Tic-Tac-Toe *(Data East)*	5.59	34	19.63
15.	Cosmo Gang *(Data East)*	5.42	2	7.36

COIN DROP GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Big Haul *(Benchmark)*	8.31	753	23.93
2.	Smokin' Token *(Seidel)*	7.82	1203	20.25
3.	Wheel 'M In *(Bromley)*	7.65	1131	22.70
4.	Goin' Rollin' *(Seidel)*	7.36	888	6.75
5.	Cut the Cheese *(Sega)*	7.05	575	12.27
6.	The Mask *(Data East)*	6.92	734	7.98
7.	Screamin' Slopes *(Midway)*	6.73	273	6.75
8.	Coin Circus *(Sammy USA)*	6.61	235	14.11
9.	Addams Family Values *(Midway)*	6.50	283	7.36
10.	Rock-N-Bowl *(Bromley)*	6.48	454	26.99
11.	Aftershock *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.40	495	12.27
12.	Home Run Hitter *(CCI)*	6.15	539	16.56
13.	Super Bank It II *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.00	186	7.36
14.	Roll For Gold *(Benchmark)*	5.93	343	9.20

GUN GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Water Game *(Bob's Space Racers)*	6.67	251	5.52
2.	Big Mouth *(Meltec)*	6.08	118	7.98
3.	Knock-Down *(Meltec)*	5.92	95	7.98

BOPPING/STOMPING GAMES

	GAME	POINT VALUE	LONG. POINTS	% OF RESP.
1.	Spider Stompin *(Island)*	7.67	1003	14.72
2.	Ribbit Racin *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.96	752	15.34
3.	Circus Hi-Rise *(Skee-Ball)*	6.67	191	5.52
4.	Swamp Stomp *(Lazer-Tron)*	6.58	539	7.36
5.	Wacky Gator *(Data East)*	6.58	406	22.09
6.	Cracky Crab *(Namco)*	6.55	166	6.75
7.	Whac-A-Mole *(Bob's Space Racers)*	6.37	139	11.66

Results are based on monthly Equipment Poll ballot returns. Point Value = average of ballot ratings on a scale of 1-10; Longevity Points = standings on Best 60 combined game lists (#1 game receives 60 points, #2 game receives 59 points, etc.) **Indicates new or reappearing games.*

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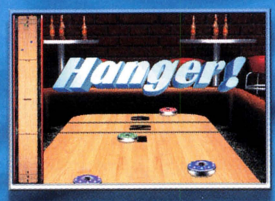

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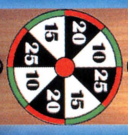

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UP FRONT

Come as you are; LEAVE DIFFERENT

While looking through *Southern Living* magazine I came across several travel inserts, the kind where the tourist and convention bureau of the state wants to spread the word about the unique pleasures within their borders and offers a postage-free postcard you can return for more information. The one from Louisiana struck a chord with me, not just because it was from my home state but because the brief opening statement, "Come as you are; leave different," had a real impact. It implied that a visit to Louisiana would change you forever.

This can be true. From Cajun country to the swamps, and from antebellum homes to French Quarter nightlife, my state is certainly a change from the attractions in some other states. Our art director Jane Nisbet and her husband, who are originally from Illinois, moved to this charming, laid-back part of the country 20 years ago and were so captivated they vowed never to leave. Their lives changed dramatically as they went from Midwest to Deep South.

Trade shows can have a similar influence. Since the trade show madness of fall '97 is over I feel changed by the experience of attending and seeing for myself the games, the people, and the optimism (yes, it's out there in small pockets). Shows are exhausting but educational, and there is no better place to connect with friends in the industry nor any better time to commiserate and plan for the future. For those who went to any of the shows, and the brave souls who were at all of the shows, their outlook must certainly be better.

It's difficult to attend these events without some change—a different point of view, a fresh idea, a game or service you haven't tried before—an engine tune-up if you will. Dave Courington of Valley Recreation Products put it perfectly when he said, "Operators have all the tools; sometimes you need a different key to start the engine."

Escaping the confines of the daily grind can be invigorating. Whether managing a game room, setting up leagues, or programming CD jukeboxes, a break away from the usual routine can have a therapeutic effect. In a hands-on business like ours it's important to be where the action is.

As soon as I walk onto an exhibit floor, whether at a national show or a state show, I can feel that engine warming up. Something new is right around the corner, along with the comfort of familiar faces. What a great combination! Pretty good after 12 years of shows, huh? And I'm not alone. I look forward to seeing you along the aisles in '98. ▲

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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COIN-OP NEWS

President signs new dollar coin bill

Industry pins future hopes on education, evaluation

The last month of 1997 saw President Clinton sign into law one of the coin machine industry's top legislative priorities over the past decade, a bill authorizing a new, gold-colored dollar coin. Unfortunately, the law did not include a provision to eliminate the paper dollar long seen as the way to ensure the success of a new dollar coin.

"We are guardedly supporting the new coin," said AMOA first vice president and government relations committee chairman Jim Stansfield. "If we don't, the issue might get put on the back shelf for years."

The new law will create a dollar coin with a distinctive edge that can be distinguished from a quarter, one of the problems with the current Susan B. Anthony dollar coin, and will picture either the Statue of Liberty or a woman of historical importance.

"This new dollar coin has the potential to gain much wider acceptance," House Banking subcommittee chairman Rep. Michael Castle, R-Del., told the Associated Press.

New quarters will also be issued from 1999 to the year 2008 with five commemorative designs each year representing each of the 50 states. Supplies of the Susan B. Anthony dollar coin are expected to be depleted in a little over two years. The SBA dollar was created in 1979.

AAMA executive director Bob Fay said the 24 to 30 months it will take to mint the new dollar coin will be used to educate other industry groups that handle a significant amount of currency including transit workers, postal employees, etc., and "hope for an upward push from those groups" and "continue public relations efforts" to get rid of the dollar bill.

Another possibility, according to members of the industry, is the formation of a commission to study the issue. A recommendation from such a commission would shield members of Congress from the political fallout of eliminating the dollar bill, not unlike the process used to determine military base closings in recent years.

A meeting of the Coin Coalition will take place this month to discuss future strategy. Members of AMOA, AAMA, NAMA, and the soft drink association will participate.

Associations to push new video content standards

Having gained tacit approval from leading Congressman for a new educational program and code of conduct regarding violent video game content, AAMA and AMOA stand poised to urge operator cooperation.

A meeting to plan strategy was held last month in Chicago. Participants included AAMA president Mike Rudowicz, executive director Bob Fay, legal counsel Eliot Portnoy, as well as IAFEC president Harold Skripsky, AMOA president Don Hesch and first vice president Jim Stansfield, and Al Stone of Sega GameWorks and Frank Cosentino of Namco-America.

The issue came to a head early last year after an advocacy group gave the coin-op industry a grade of D in dealing with the content issue. That prompted Sens. Herb Kohl, D-Wis., and Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., to demand a response from the industry.

Industry response came jointly from AAMA and AMOA in the form of a proposed educational program and code of conduct, which has been received well by Kohl and Lieberman, according to AAMA executive director Bob Fay.

AMOA government relations chairman Jim Stansfield said a letter endorsing the industry proposal was expected from the senators.

However, another real challenge lies ahead, convincing individual members of the industry to adopt the new program. "They have accepted the program and now we have to implement it," said Fay.

Educational aspects of the industry proposal include making posters available to locations, as well as information kits, that draw attention to violent content and explain the parental advisory system that is in place. Fay said Congress would also like to see a pilot program in selected locations isolating "life-like violent games" to determine whether play increases or decreases.

The code of conduct drafted encourages manufacturers to produce games suitable for all ages and include parental advisories on all new games. In addition it calls locations and operators to encourage parental participation in locations, make every effort to place parental advisory messages on games and post information about the advisory system, and discourage young children from playing games which carry a Strong or red advisory sticker and message.

Fay said details of the proposals, including how the education material will be distributed, and a plan to advertise their message in the trade press would be on the agenda at last month's meeting. (For an update, see the "News Bulletin.")

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#1

Equipment Poll

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"How do my competitors find such good deals?"

#2

Classified Ads

GEE!!!

"When did that game come out?"

#3

What's New

AARGH!

"Why can't I fix this ✖!!★? monitor?"*

#4

Technical Information

CCG MetaMedia introduces full line of production services

CCG MetaMedia of New York, N.Y., showcased its full line of technical production capabilities for the location-based entertainment industry at the IAAPA convention and trade show held in November in Orlando, Fla.

The company, already known for its REALWare unencumbered virtual reality system that eliminates the need for headsets, showcased for the first time its additional services including 3D video production, custom media displays, and exhibit designs.

"When we first came to IAAPA, we thought this audience would only be interested in REALWare," said Tim O'Donnell, chairman of CCG MetaMedia. "We found out that many people were impressed with our background in interactive media, and there is a real need in this industry for production companies with our mix of conceptual and technical expertise."

The company also presented two new REALWare VR games, Stop That Racket and Challenge on Zeltor, in addition to its popular menu of sports applications including Virtual Hoops, CyberPong, Break Serve Virtual Tennis, and VR Keeper.

GreyStone Technology software to support Thomson simulator

GreyStone Technology Inc. of San Diego, Calif., and U.K.-based Thomson Entertainment have agreed to integrate the former's 3D interactive entertainment software on the latter's new interactive motion platform, Venturer S2i.

Thomson's Venturer S2i utilizes Intel processors, and GreyStone is currently developing software based on Intel's PC architecture including XS-G, a real-time 3D game that is scheduled for coin-op release this spring.

"The agreement with Thomson Entertainment demonstrates our continuing plan to generate revenues through the growing 3D digital media market," said GreyStone chairman and CEO Richard Smith. "By combining our software skills with Thomson's world-class expertise in the development of entertainment platforms, we will provide location-based entertainment and high-end arcade markets with cutting-edge, interactive content and integrated motion for an immersive and exciting experience."

XS-G is a combat racing game in which highly advanced aircraft race against armed adversaries through fortified environments. The game can be networked or operated as a stand-alone unit. For more on the Venturer S2i, see coverage of IAAPA in this issue.

PlayPak announces distributor agreements

PlayPak Systems of Colmar, Pa., the Macintosh G3-based arcade PC solution provider, recently announced agreements with 10 of the industry's leading distributors. "We are happy to welcome this group of distinguished industry leaders to our distribution network," said company CEO Dan Stein.

Distributors included: Brady Distributing, H.A. Franz and Co., Lieberman Music Co., AMA Distributors, 50th State Coin-Op, C.A. Robinson, Mondial Distributing, Music-Vend Distributing, State Sales and Service, Struve Distributing, and Commercial Music.

PlayPak has also released a list of companies providing hardware and software support for its system. On the hardware side, PlayPak is working with Apple Computer, Techworks, Microtech International, Componex, ATI Technologies, Happ Controls, D&D Cabinets, CH Products, U Max Computer, Wells-Gardner, and Apple Commercial Credit.

Providing software are GT Interactive, MacSoft, Interplay, MacPlay, Gen.X Software, Creative Edge Software, Plaidworld Software, Ultra United Games, Logicware, Digital Consulting, Monkey Byte Development, Double Aught Inc., Pangea Software, Green Dragon Creations, and Dadgum Software.

Initial units were scheduled for shipping during the second week of last month. Market tests of the final versions of the initial games—Untouchable, Battle Girl, and Project Magellan—took place in late November and early December.

For more information, contact PlayPak Systems, 2951 Advance Lane, Suite D, Colmar, PA 18915; (215)996-1740; fax (215)996-1839; e-mail (info@negs.net); Web site (http://www.negs.net).

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Just Kiddie Rides sold to White River Partners

The assets of Just Kiddie Rides were recently purchased by White River Partners and been recapitalized under a new operating company, Just Kiddie Ride Enterprises (JKRE) Inc. This new firm will focus on manufacturing, distributing, and operating coin-op kiddie rides.

JKRE was scheduled to debut its new line of Sesame Street rides sometime last month. The rides will be domestically manufactured and feature high quality animated designs, gel coat durability, educational and interactive electronics, and a new solid-state drive and movement system. Other new product introductions are expected this year.

Day-to-day operations at JKRE will be managed by Michael Reda, founder of the predecessor company. Former Just Kiddie Rides president Jerry Reda will be responsible for the company's marketing, sales, and new product development initiatives as well as business strategy and growth.

White River Partners is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the White River Corp., which acquires promising companies in various industries. White River Corp. has a market capitalization of $350 million and no long-term or short-term debt. In addition, the company has approximately $200 million to fund its acquisitions.

Just Kiddie Rides Inc. acquired Childrobics in October 1996. At the time of the acquisition, Childrobics was a financially troubled company, according to a spokesperson for Just Kiddie Rides, and the kiddie ride division was unable to reach its full potential due to capital constraints of both Childrobics and its other operating divisions. Prior to the acquisition, Just Kiddie Rides reportedly had a seven-year history of uninterrupted profitability and positive cash flow.

Cadillac Jack simplifies redemption law questions

Cadillac Jack Inc., the Tucker, Ga.,-based redemption game manufacturer recently announced a plan to help take some of the guesswork out of complying with state redemption laws.

Each of the company's game display will include the redemption law and law string of the state when a player inserts money into the game. The games also print a voucher containing a redemption statement, a signature line, the point value, and the time and date. Currently, this applies to Georgia, Florida, and Texas redemption laws.

The company has also introduced three new games including Funny Fruit with five ways for players to win, Triple Play offering three game play choices, and Super 97 with a raise feature and four types of cards. For more information, call (800)684-4263; Web site (http://www.cadillackjack.com).

Ice Bound Center unveils new LaserTrek arena

Ice Bound Entertainment Center, a 90,000-square-foot sports and entertainment complex located in Plano, Texas, has installed a LaserTrek real-time laser tag system from Heads Up Technologies of Carrollton, Texas. Ice Bound is reportedly the first location to include laser tag in an ice skating facility.

As many as 18 players can compete simultaneously in the 2,000-square-foot LaserTrek arena. Other feature attractions include two NHL-size skating rinks, an interactive arcade, amusement game room, party facilities, and corporate meeting rooms.

"Ice Bound visitors can step off the ice and into the LaserTrek arena for a science fiction-like thrill," said Heads Up president Rob Harshaw. "LaserTrek players are exposed to a total sophisticated entertainment package including everything from the movie-quality pregame briefing to the custom designed special effects."

A Fromm factory visit

Wells-Gardner Electronics sponsored Play Meter technical writer Randy Fromm's Chicago Arcade School at its factory, Nov. 3-7, 1997. More than 40 students from as far away as California attended. There was even a student from Italy! Randy sent a personal thank-you to Mark Kamerowski, Chuck Hedrick, and Anthony Spier. Students took a factory tour and saw first-hand how Wells-Gardner manufactures the monitors. One student, Dean DePauw of Metro Amusements in Streeter, Ill., even won a brand-new, 25-inch monitor donated by Wells-Gardner for the school. This year's Chicago Arcade School will be held at Wells-Gardner the week of Nov. 2-6.

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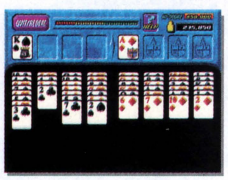

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Enchanted Castle acquired by Ogden Entertainment

The Enchanted Castle Restaurant and Entertainment Complex in Lombard, Ill., has been acquired by Ogden Entertainment, a subsidiary of Ogden Corp., a global company that focuses on entertainment, aviation, and energy.

Enchanted Castle president Harold Skripsky will become an advisor for Ogden Entertainment, which is interested in expanding its holdings in the area of themed attractions. Skripsky will manage Enchanted Castle during a transition period.

"I am very pleased to have Enchanted Castle be a part of Ogden," stated Skripsky. "I have always wanted a strategic partner to help grow the concept." Skripsky is currently the president of the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers.

One of Ogden Entertainment's goals is to establish an FEC division. Skripsky will contribute to the growth of this division by identifying sites for acquisition and developing new sites.

According to R. Richard Ablon, chairman and CEO of Ogden, "We view family entertainment centers as another component of our growth plans and expect to build our platform in the business by the development and acquisition of existing operations. Our objective is to roll-out concepts that will bring quality entertainment options to families."

Skripsky added, "The Ogden Entertainment group has created a number of unique entertainment concepts and is committed to becoming a key player in our industry. They offer the backing of a quality organization with the ability to grow the FEC division quickly, and the potential for career growth."

Visitors to the 46,000-square-foot Enchanted Castle marvel at the themed 600-seat restaurant with karaoke and animatronic singing dragons; the Virtual Speedway of 18 linked racing games; the 800-prize redemption center; the 3,000-square-foot ImaGYMnation Station children's playland; 280 video, sports, and redemption games; nine-hole miniature golf course; Q-ZAR laser tag; Krazy (bumper) Kars; and The Rage Movie 'n Motion IWERKS Theater.

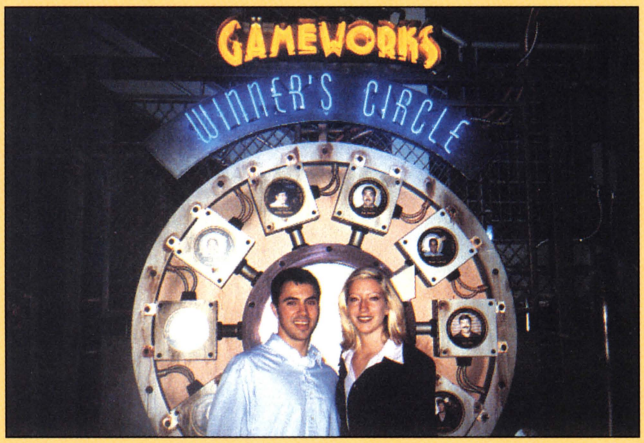
Harold Skripsky

Skripsky has guided the evolution of Enchanted Castle since its opening in 1983, then a 10,000-square-foot restaurant and game room. A major 30,000-square-foot expansion in 1989 turned the center into the largest entertainment complex in Illinois.

Skripsky and then-partner Gary Isner were honored with the Small Business Administration 's Entrepreneurial Success Award in 1993 and became the third inductees into the SBA's National Hall of Fame.

The same year an agreement was reached with Discovery Zone to develop an FEC division for that company and grow the Enchanted Castle concept. Two years later, in 1995. Skripsky bought Enchanted Castle back and became sole owner and president.

Big winners



Leslie Lally, daughter of Play Meter publisher Carol P. Lally, and her friend Derrick Brissette found themselves in the winner's circle when they attended opening festivities at the newest Sega GameWorks location in Tempe, Ariz. Both are students at nearby Arizona State University.

BWB Newark curtails sales in U.S. market

U.K.-based redemption game manufacturer BWB Newark Ltd. has decided to step up its pursuit of market share in Europe while curtailing its active pursuit of sales in the United States. The new policy went into effect Jan. 1.

"They will still be able to build their Sunset Skill Stop redemption machine on a 51 machine basis and are committed to taking care of parts and supplies for any and all customers," said Don Tunstall, who had served as the company's United States sales representative. "If there is anything that past customers have a need for in training schools, parts, or customer visits, just call me and I will still be able to handle it for them. I will be pursuing other interests that have developed in the last year, hopefully bringing other manufacturers' equipment to the American market."

Parts and new games can be ordered directly through Quentin Scott at company headquarters in Newark Nottinghamshire, England, 011 44 1636 707000. Tunstall can be reached at (407)578-1238.

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Cybertainment Systems pushes forward with digital jukebox

West Palm Beach, Fla.,-based Cybertainment Systems Corp. will begin assembly of a digital jukebox using components including a Regatta cabinet and amplifying equipment supplied by P & P Technologies, the company's Bruce "Buck" Bechtold told Play Meter.

Cybertainment Systems began marketing upgrade kits last year, then converted existing jukebox cabinets into PC-driven digital jukeboxes. "We are now going to be doing our own assembly including wall units," explained Bechtold. "The retrofit kits continue to sell well."

The company is also working on a number of initiatives, according to Bechtold, including extension of its current music license agreements for Mexico and Canada, setting up a small distributor network, and making music available through affiliate companies. Cybertainment's jukebox can be updated with new music via modem connection.

"We are still here and we are not going away," he said. "Currently, we are working with a number of companies that have a diversified music distribution system." For more information, call the company at (561)966-4534 or check out its Web site (http://www.cyberjukebox.com).

IAAPA names board members

The International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions approved its slate of officers and board of directors for 1997-98 at the association's annual convention and trade show in Orlando.

Larry Cochran of Six Flags Theme Parks took over as chairman of the board from Gena Romana, immediate past president. John Roberts of Busch Entertainment is first vice chairman; Rene Aziz of Grupo Magico is second vice chairman; and Bill Sims of Ogden Entertainment is third vice chairman.

Clark Robinson of Lagoon Park was appointed to a three-year term as treasurer, and John Graff was approved as the president and CEO of IAAPA, as well as its secretary and general counsel.

New board members include Play Meter contributing writer Michael Getlan of Amusement Consultants, Chip Cleary of Long Island Adventureland and Splish Splash, John Corcoran of Ocean Park in Hong Kong, Amanda Thompson of Blackpool Pleasure Park, Mark Lazarus of Myrtle Beach Grand Prix, Colin Dawson of Dreamland Theme Park, and Jack Mendes of Bob's Space Racers.

Lazer-Tron introduces *Prize Zone* update and national prize system

Redemption game manufacturer Lazer-Tron recently made available the 2.0 software update for its *Prize Zone* unit. The new revision adds five games to the original seven. New games include Prize Zone Bowl, Chip Away, Gem Run, Slide Master, and Tri-Scraper.

Prize Zone Bowl is a two-player bowling game in which players use the trackball to propel a ball down the alley. Chip Away, another two-player novelty game, challenges player to drop chips from a claw to link up with similarly colored chips on the playfield.

Gem Run is a two-player maze game that pits players against scorpions and snakes as they try to retrieve all the precious stones on the playfield. Slide Master is a skill-stop game that features five progressive jackpots. Tri-Scraper is a Solitaire-style game that offers speed bonuses and penalties.

In addition to the new games and features, Lazer-Tron is also shipping the new national Prize Fulfillment System which will allow players to win large prizes on *Prize Zone* games signed up for the system. Players may accumulate their Prize Bucks playing the games at any location in the system and redeem the coupons for any of the prizes shown on a sign mounted on top of the game.

Additional prizes will be available at the company's Web site (http://www.lazer-tron.com). They will range from baseball caps and radios to camping gear, TVs, and VCRs. Players will mail in their coupons to Lazer-Tron, where they will be validated and then invoiced to the operator who owns the game. An encryption system will ensure proper security.

After receiving payment from the operator through an automatic bank sweep or a check from the operator, Lazer-Tron will mail the prize to the player. Prizes should be received by the player in three to four weeks. For further information, contact Lazer-Tron, (510)460-0873.

A banner day

Karl Feder (c) of Pacific Vend Distributors in Vancouver hosted a band of merry manufacturer representatives at a recent open house, (l-r): Chris Brady of Dynamo, Pete Gustafson of Sega, Darren Decatoire of Konami, Tim Jackson of SNK, Daryl Williams of SNK, and Ray Bersabe of Atari. Needless to say, the open house was a success.

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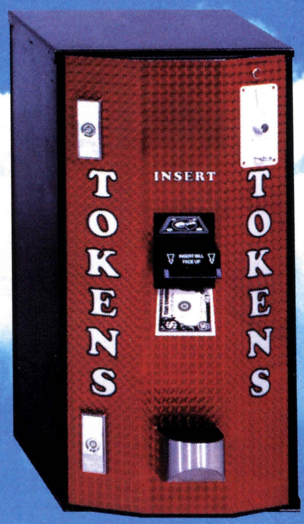

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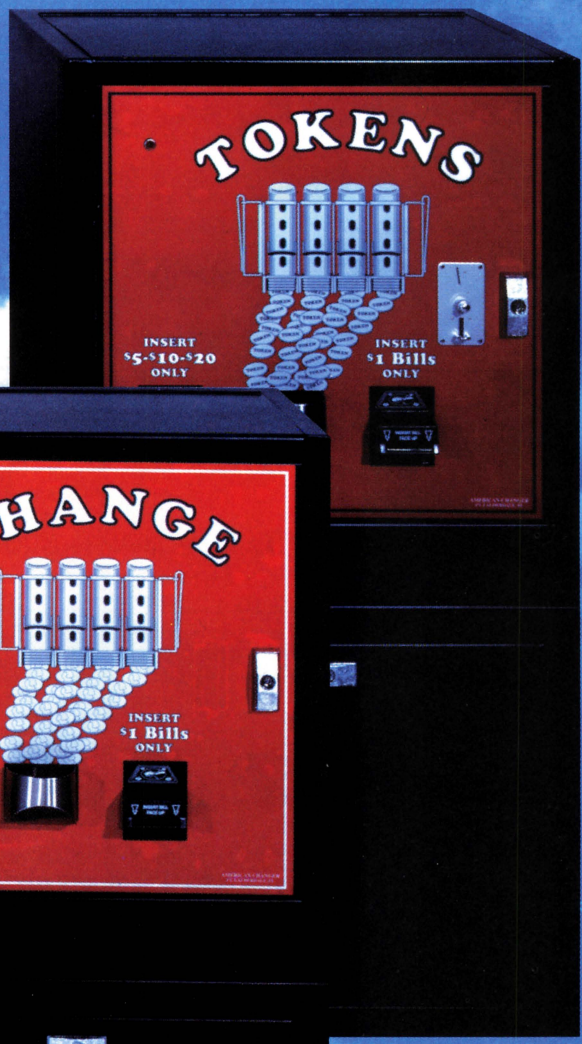

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SNK attends open houses

Jeff Yantz (left) and Daryl Williams are ready to support the new product line at the Mondial Spotlight Show.

Jeff Yantz (left) with State Sales' Steve Koenigsberg putting SNK's *Road's Edge* through the paces.

One of L.A.'s top operators (right) shares Tim Jackson's excitement on the release of the Hyper Neo Geo 64.

Nightclub & Bar show on tap this month in Las Vegas

The 23rd International Nightclub & Bar and Beverage Retailer convention and trade show will be held Jan. 19-21 at the Las Vegas Convention Center. The show is expected to draw close to 700 exhibitors and 10,000 representatives of nightclubs, bars, restaurants, casinos, and liquor stores.

Among the 40 in-depth seminars and panel discussions is a presentation by Play Meter contributing writer Michael Getlan of Amusement Consultants of New Rochelle, N.Y., entitled Coin-Op Strategies That Pay Off.

Exhibitors include coin-op amusement game manufacturers; beverage and beverage service providers; lighting, sound, and video suppliers; microbreweries; promotions and marketing firms; POS system makers; security agencies; food service providers, and cigar manufacturers.

Special events will include two evening mixers, the International DJ Spin-Off, NABR's Wines of the World Tasting, Jim Beam's Cigar Social, and a Blues Brothers Concert. The National Association of Beverage Retailers and the National Licensed Beverage Association will hold the annual conventions in conjunction. For more information, contact show organizers, (800)247-3881 or (601)236-5510.

Photo sticker mania

You've seen them at all the shows or heard about them. Now get a quick rundown of available units shown at IAAPA (pg. 75). Above, attendees stop at the Kodak booth to sample *Sticker Prints*.

Incredible Technologies hosts second *Golden Tee* playoffs

Incredible Technologies will host its second National Championship Playoffs, showcasing its *Golden Tee* `97 game, on March 26 at the Amusement Showcase International (formerly ACME) trade show in Las Vegas.

A Jan. 9-25 International Tournament System event, known as Qualifier II, will determine the contenders for the finals. This year, the top six scores from each of the six ITS regions will win round-trip airfare and two nights in Las Vegas in addition to a spot in the finals.

First place is $10,000, while second through 36th places will also win cash prizes from $5,000 to $500. Total prize money equals $45,000. Advertising and rules for this special event will appear on *Golden Tee* tournament games and LED sign messages.

Other upcoming events include an $80,000 Special Tournament Feb. 6-22, the final event on *Golden Tee* `97 March 6-22, and the first national tournament on *Golden Tee* `98 April 10-26.

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IAAPA presents exhibitor, service awards at convention

The International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions bestowed honors on its show exhibitors for both presentation and new products and services. The awards were announced at the association's annual trade show and convention held in Orlando, Fla.

Iwerks Entertainment was presented with the distinguished Image Award, while *Amusement Today* received the Impact Award. Here's a look at all the winners in both categories:

EXHIBITORS

Major theme park attraction: 1st—Chance Rides Inc.; Honorable Mention (HM)—Huss Maschinenfabrik GmbH & Co.

Kiddie ride attraction: 1st—Zamperla.

Waterpark attraction: 1st—Proslide Technology; HM—SCS Interactive.

FEC attractions: 1st—Thomson Entertainment; HM—SCS Interactive.

Coin-op kiddie ride: 1st—Kiddies Mfg.; HM—The Kiddie Ride Exchange.

Technology applied to amusement: 1st—SimEx; HM—Advanced Animations.

Food Services: 1st—Taylor Co.; HM—Pizzas of Eight.

Games: 1st—Bob's Space Racers; HM—Skee-Ball Inc.

Coin-op arcade and redemption equipment: 1st—Bob's Space Racers; HM—Sega GameWorks.

Merchandise: 1st—NANCO/Nancy Sales; HM—Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties.

Revenue and admission control: 1st—Gateway Ticketing Systems; HM—VGS Systems Engineering.

Show productions and entertainment: 1st—Imax Corp.; HM—BRC Imagination Arts.

Displays and sets: 1st—The Wright Group; HM—Jack Rouse Associates.

Services: 1st—Rock & Waterscape Systems; HM—Modeworks.

Equipment and supplies: 1st—Eastman Kodak; HM—Taylor Co.

NEW PRODUCTS

Major theme park attraction: 1st—Endangered Species (Chance Rides): HM—Shot `N Drop (Huss Maschinenfabrik GmbH & Co.)

Kiddie ride attraction: 1st—Family Swinger (Zamperla); HM—Speedway (Zamperla).

Waterpark attraction: 1st—The Fun House (SCS Interactive); HM—Proliner (Proslide Technology).

FEC attraction: 1st—Foam Factory (SCS Interactive); HM—Xtreme Voodoo (Stricor Inc.).

Coin-op kiddie ride: 1st—*SpiderRider* (Kiddies Mfg.); HM—*The Incredible Hulk* (Kiddies Mfg.).

Technology applied to amusement: 1st—Live Wire Entertainment (Live Wire Entertainment); HM—MediaMatrix (Peavey Electronics).

Food service: 1st—Custom Logo Tables (Home on the Range); HM—Chicken Fryz (Zartic Inc.).

Games: 1st—*Men's Room* (Outstanding Amusements); HM—*Player Ready Game* (Bob's Space Racers).

Coin-op arcade and redemption equipment: 1st—*The Lost World* (Sega GameWorks); HM—*Star Catcher* (Seidel Amusement Machine Co.).

Merchandise: 1st—Plush Alien (NANCO/Nancy Sales); HM—Photowave Interactive Technology (Photowave Inc.).

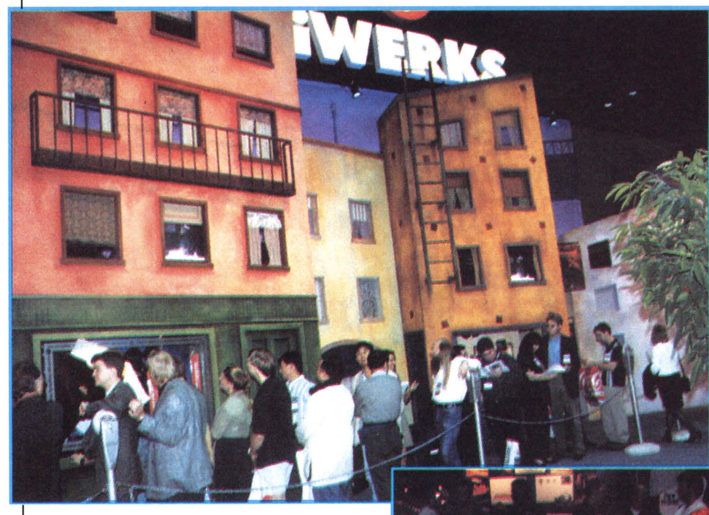
Revenue and admission control: 1st—Accudata Link (Goal Industries); HM—TUT-65RTB Registering Ticket Box (Tomsed Corp.)

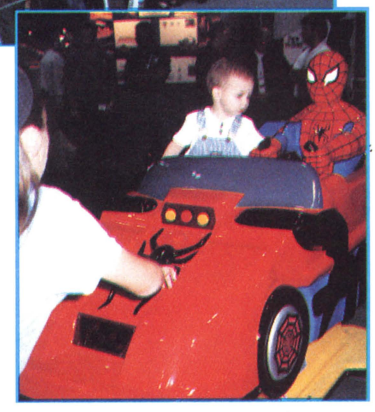
Show production and equipment: 1st—Reboot—The Ride (Imax Corp.); HM—Video Server (Edwards Technologies).

Displays and sets: 1st—Scout's Alley at Turner Field (Jack Rouse Associates); HM—Arctic, Glacial Ice & Snow (Rock & Waterspace Systems).

Services: 1st—Arctic, Glacial Ice & Snow (Rock & Waterspace Systems); HM—*Amusement Today* (*Amusement Today*).

Equipment and supplies: 1st—QS Series two-sided grill (Taylor Co.); HM—Portable Ground Mount Concessions (Anchor Ind.).





Top photo:
Iwerks Entertainment garnered IAAPA's Image Award.

Bottom photo:
Kiddie's Mfg. picked up two new product awards for *SpiderRider* (pictured) and *The Incredible Hulk*.

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Pinball hits the links with *No Good Golfers!*

Williams Electronics Games has come up with yet a new way to challenge golfing enthusiasts, Buzz and Budd, two mischievous gophers who taunt and tease players as they try to complete nine holes of golf in the game *No Good Golfers!*, the company's latest pinball adventure.

"It's a wild way to play nine holes of golf," said Williams director of sales Rachel Davies. "Gophers are popping up on the playfield, balls are launching through the air at golf carts, and car windows are shattering. It's a very entertaining game."

Game play focuses on completing nine holes of golf. To play a hole, players shoot a lit drive shot, then complete the hole by hitting the lit putt-out shot. Strategy comes into play as an innovative new Spinning Whirlwind in the middle of the playfield provides an additional award when the player putts out.

The game introduces another new innovative playfield toy, the Slam Ramp feature. At the beginning of each ball, the Slam Ramp mechanism lowers to the playfield and challenges the player to hit it and launch it into the driving range. Once there, the player can either hit the cart, award yardage, or hit a valuable hole-in-one.

Throughout the game, Buzz and Bud provide a running dialogue and serve as targets that activate multiball. The gophers are also featured prominently in the playfield and backbox artwork, which includes a real backglass with a mirror.

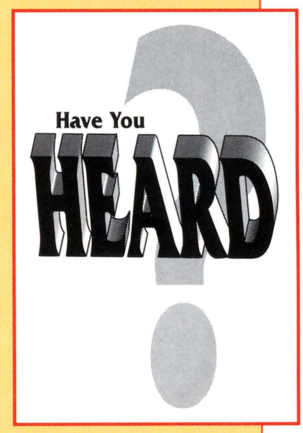
☛ **Sammy USA**, formerly known as American Sammy, recently introduced its prize-dispensing game *Sports Arena*, which challenges players to stop flashing lights on a win symbol. Successful players win a prize dispensed via a unique new prize vending system. For more information, contact the company, (847)364-9787; Web site (http://www.sammyusa.com).

☛ **Betson Coin-Op** Distributing Co., a wholly-owned subsidiary of H. Betti Industries, has completed the acquisition of certain assets of Betson Pacific Distributing. All four offices—Buena Park, South San Francisco, Phoenix, and Las Vegas—will now be known as Betson West

☛ AMOA vice president and Play Meter contributing writer **Rich Holley** of Southeast Game Brokers in Tampa, Fla., has assumed the duties of assistant chairman of the national operator association's Government Relations Committee, reports committee chairman Jim Stansfield.

☛ **Virtuality**, the former manufacturer of virtual reality game systems, is now a wholly-owned subsidiary of Retinal Display Inc. of Los Altos, Calif.. The new company unveiled its next generation personal display system, the Virtuality VRD, at IAAPA `97 as part of Dreamality's DreamGlider immersive VR system.

☛ **Midway Games**' home game subsidiary Midway Home Entertainment has released two new Nintendo 64 software titles, Mortal Kombat Mythologies: Sub-Zero and The NHL and NHLPA Present Wayne Gretsky's 3D Hockey. They represent the company's ninth and tenth N64 offerings.



☛ **Play-By-Play Toys & Novelties** announced the pricing of its public offering of two million shares of common stock by the company at $16 per share. The company estimated net proceeds of $29.7 million after underwriting fees and other transaction-related expenses.

☛ **Dave & Buster's** was scheduled to open its Denver location last month and has announced plans to open four additional locations in the United States during this fiscal year. Sites will include Utica, Mich.; Irvine, Calif.; Rockland County, N.Y.; and Orange, Calif.

☛ Several companies have new Web page addresses including **Micro Mfg.** (http://www.micromanufacturing.com); **Coin Mechanisms** (http://www.coinmech.com); and **Putt Putt Games To Go** (http://www.putt-putt.com/GamesToGo).

☛ **Quantum3D** has announced its support for 3Dfx Interactive's new graphics chipset, Voodoo 2. Codenamed Obsidian2, the second generation Quantum3D's Obsidian family of real-time 3D graphic accelerators will employ configurations of the Voodoo 2.

☛ The third annual **Michigan Pinball Championships** will be held Jan. 15-18 at the Vandyke Park Hotel in Warren, Mich. Prize money will total $5,000 and sponsors include Bally/Williams Pinball, Sega Pinball, the Michigan Coin Machine Operators Association, Atlas Distributing, and Cleveland Coin. For more information, call (800)369-4263.

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Condolences

Sincere sympathy is extended to Ken Anderson of Sega GameWorks and his family on the loss of his wife **Angela Anderson** Nov. 10 following a battle with cancer. Angie often accompanied Ken to trade events and was well-known in the industry. In addition to her immediate family and friends, she will be sadly missed by her many acquaintances in the coin-op world.

The industry lost a 40-year veteran on Nov. 21 when **Nathan Feinstein**, former president and owner of World Wide Distributors, passed away. He was 84. Nate was honored in 1969 by the State of Israel as a man of the year in Chicago. He is survived by his daughter Jane Rubenstein, a brother and sister, and two grandchildren. Memorial donations can be sent to B'nai Torah, 2789 Oak St., Highland Park, IL 60035.

New Jersey seashore redemption arcade operator **Danny Jaleniewski** of The Walk In Boys in Keansburg, N.J., also died in November. Danny's location was known for its unsurpassed redemption inventory, seasonal decorations, and annual big prize. He had been at The Walk In Boys since 1966. He will be missed by family, friends, and customers who came to know him well over the years.

Nathan Feinstein

In Memory

Red Jones (c) with friends Dee and Chuck Frank at the VNEA Championships in 1995.

He was known as Mr. Pool and will forever be associated with the game he dearly loved, played, and promoted for seven decades. **A.M. "Red" Jones** died Oct. 9 in St. Petersburg, Fla., from injuries sustained in a traffic accident by his home where he lived with his daughter and grandson. He was 84.

Red was truly a legend in the sport of pool. An oil painting of him stands in the Billiard Congress of America Hall of Fame. An avid supporter of the Valley National Eight-Ball Association, Red received the VNEA's highest honor in 1983: the first Warren Kelley Meritorious Service Award. And the VNEA team uniform award was recently named after him.

In the July 1989 edition of Play Meter, Red talked about his lifetime passion for the game of pool and his deep love for his devoted wife Carrie who had passed away that year from cancer.

He harkened back to the 1920s when as a lad of 14 or 15 he noticed the difference in the perception of billiard clubs for affluent people and the public pool rooms that were frowned upon. Red elevated the image of pool through continuous promotions, introducing more ladies to the sport, and running well managed and appointed pool rooms. He firmly believed that "the game of pool is the same no matter what the location. What makes the difference is the physical environment and management policies."

In the 1970's he toured the country, on request, with a team of female honor students who gave pool demonstrations that showcased a repertoire of 188 trick shots Red had taught them. "We never played for money," he said, "just for charity organizations, with the motive being to say a good word for the game of pool."

Red served in the U.S. Air Force from 1934 to 1968 and was involved with pool wherever he was stationed. After completing his service duties he visited his pool rooms and often stayed at one until closing. By 1968 Red had seven pool rooms with 144 tables in Maryland and Virginia.

While an employee of the Pentagon, Red played pool at the White House with presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, and Lyndon B. Johnson. He was friends with all the greats of pool, among them Willie Hoppe, Ralph Greenleaf, "Wimpy" Luther Lassiter, Willie Mosconi, Irving Crane, Steve Mizerak, and Nick Varner. In 1975 Red predicted the end of straight pool, claiming that 8-ball and 9-ball would dominate. His prediction came true.

VNEA executive director Gregg Elliott commented: "Red's history with the association has been tremendous; he was involved from the beginning and has been our grand marshall. He's been extremely good to the association and our operators around the country, and he was an exceptionally good friend to me for 10 years. Everyone loved Red." ▲

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FROM LEFT FIELD

A tale of RISKS and REWARDS *and other clichés*

Steve White
Special Projects Editor

So here we are. It's 1998, and the Arcade PC has yet to arrive despite more than a year of debate and behind-the-scenes-positioning on the part of players from both inside and outside traditional amusement game circles.

Why, you ask, has it taken so long? Some would argue, with good reason, that a development cycle of 18 to 24 months precludes bringing games to market in less than two years. That may be true.

However, a handful of titles loosely or closely based on the hardware specification which underlies the concept's technical model are currently available or will be shortly. But it's only a handful, and most of the licensing and distribution issues remain murky in this cart/horse equation.

That's because another factor, a deeply rooted law governing human life, is at play—the ratio of risk versus reward. To explain it in simple terms, the social scientist might argue that religion thrives in educated societies because the risk of eternal damnation far outweighs the uncertain rewards of eternal life.

In fact, the popularity of the Arcade PC concept is based on this very law: operators are more willing to bear the risk of hardware costs if they can leverage the chance for reward across several software titles. So what's the problem?

One essential stumbling block is the risk involved in launching such a system without any assurances of reward. Operators are hesitant to purchase equipment without a firm belief that software will follow, and any that have traveled down past roads of re-usable hardware such as virtual reality have good reason to fear.

On the other side of the fence, software companies are reluctant to invest resources into a market that currently has no base for distribution. Furthermore, several game system manufacturers are trying to stake their claim to some portion of the market with units that run proprietary, if PC-based, content modified and provided by them alone. Bearing the risk of manufacturing costs, they want to ensure participation in the ongoing rewards.

Thus, we have a chicken-and-egg dilemma or maybe a Mexican standoff, and no strictly open platform!

The big boys, Microsoft and Intel, have argued for a wide open platform, one that would bypass the old system of proprietary hardware, and both have worked diligently to educate and facilitate development of such a system. But neither has moved beyond an advisory or matchmaking role in driving the model into the marketplace. The rewards may not be worth that kind of risk for companies that have leveraged their resources across all facets of the global marketplace.

They have wisely left the heavy lifting to individual hardware and software vendors as well as coin-op manufacturers, distributors, and operators who will participate directly in the risks and rewards of an open PC game platform when and if it is adopted by the industry.

So what first appeared on the scenes in bold brush strokes, painted by Microsoft's evangelist James Plamondon as he established a coin-op beachhead, now lays in apparent shambles with a number of companies moving forward and no real consensus on where they are going. But that's the nature of evangelism, a standard that predates the PC in which many are called to do the work of one.

So don't throw the baby out with the bath water...just yet. ▲

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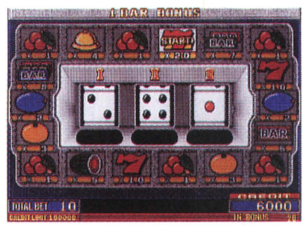

1 BAR BONUS

SELECTABLE THREE TYPES OF DOUBLE UP GAME

NORMAL TYPE

HI-LO 5 CARD TYPE

HI-LO 3 CARD TYPE

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WHO'S **NEWS**

Touch screen game manufacturer JVL of Canada has expanded its sales staff, adding **VALERIE BECHTOLD**, **DAVID SANDLOFER**, and **JIM HALL**.

Bechtold has 15 years of domestic and international sales experience in prior posts with Coin Concepts and Planet Earth Entertainment. She will be responsible for the company's West Coast territory.

David Sandlofer brings over 20 years of experience in vending and amusements to his new position. His career includes owning and operating Five Star Vending and Amusements, serving as assistant general manager of Birmingham Vending, and tenure with Dixie-Narco and Rowe.

He will be responsible for the Southeast and Southwest territories.

Jim Hall has over five years of domestic and international sales and management experience and was formerly midwest sales manager for Valley Recreation Products. He will be responsible for the Midwest territory.

The JVL sales team, (l-r): David Sandlofer, Mort Ansky, Valerie Bechtold, and Jim Hall.

JVL vice president of sales and marketing Mort Ansky commented, "With the introduction of our new *Concorde 2* countertop machine, JVL is planning for significant growth over the next year. Each person we've brought on board will contribute different things to our sales team, and, as always, we're looking to increase what we can bring to our customers at both the product and customer service levels. The JVL sales force can be reached at (800)296-6657.

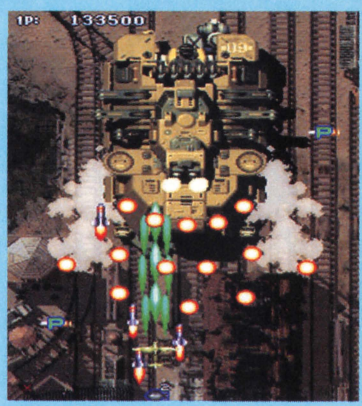
DENNIS MCMULLEN has been named senior vice president of development for Jeepers! Inc., the company known for its indoor animated theme parks. Twelve parks are currently in operation, two in the Washington D.C., area, two in Detroit, two in Chicago, two in Kansas City, two in Phoenix, and one each in San Antonio and Salt Lake City. The company plans to open 12 additional parks in 1998 and 24 in 1999. Two Jeepers Jr! miniparks opened inside Toys "R" Us KidsWorld stores in Elizabeth, N.J., and Fairfax, Va., in 1996.

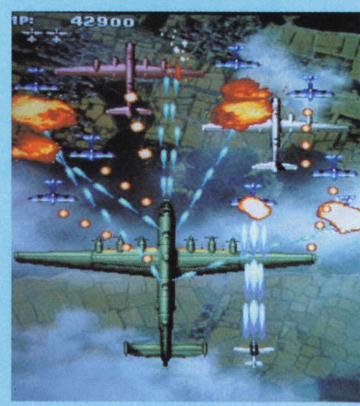
McMullen, who has a 21-year career in the real estate field, will be responsible for all corporate development and real estate acquisitions. Initially, he will focus on target markets in the northeast, mid-Atlantic, southeastern, and mid-western states. McMullen will be at corporate headquarters in Waltham, Mass., (781)890-1800; fax (781)890-1810.

Technik Mfg., manufacturer of gaming, promotional, and prepaid phone card machines has announced several staff changes. **KIMBERLEE GADDIS** has been named to the new post of marketing coordinator. She will handle Technik's marketing research, advertising, and promotions. **TIM GRAF** has been promoted from materials manager to sales representative responsible for sales and the promotion of all product lines. **CHIP HOWELL** has been named to fill the post of materials manager, and Melanie Jarmin has moved up from the cabinet department to quality/production control. All can be reached at (402)564-3191; fax (402)564-0406.

International sales agent **MIREILLE CHEVALIER** of Chevalier International Trading Service has moved her office from San Francisco to 1808 Greencreek Drive, San Jose, CA 95124; (406)264-4773; fax (406)264-5070. Chevalier specializes in video games and gaming equipment. ▲

STRIKERS 1945





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BEYOND THE PLAYFIELD

1

REGIONAL EVENT:

1 -- **SOUTHEAST GAME BROKERS** of Tampa, Fla., exhibited six *San Francisco Rush: the Rock* video simulators at the Annual Southeast Regional Bowling Centers Convention and Trade Show held at the Adam's Mark Daytona Beach Resort. The simulators were linked and prizes were awarded to the winners of the races. Company president and CEO Rich Holley, a regular exhibitor at this event, was exuberant about the results of the show and is planning a more extravagant exhibit next time. Pictured, (l-r): Rich Holley, Mike Holley, and Bev Holley at their booth.

SIDELIGHTS FROM IAAPA:

2

2 -- **SELF-PROCLAIMED** french fry lover Mort Ansky of JVL joked at the Andreu International hospitality suite, "What are the rest of you folks having?" as he took a sample from a platter piled high with piping hot spuds. We know what to order with lunch, Mort!

3 -- **OVER AT THE QNC INC**. (Quick n' Crispy) booth, Maureen and Desmond Lodewick were busy serving up tasty morsels of chicken, french fries, cheese fingers, egg rolls, and hot dogs to showgoers. Desmond pointed out that food service helps keep customers in locations longer, which translates to a healthier bottom line. Food does not have to be a profit center in itself, although it can be. The true benefit is convenience for patrons who don't need to leave your fun center. The longer they stay the more they play your games.

4 --**BARBARA JOYIENS** of Sega GameWorks celebrated her birthday during IAAPA. Here at the Sega hospi-

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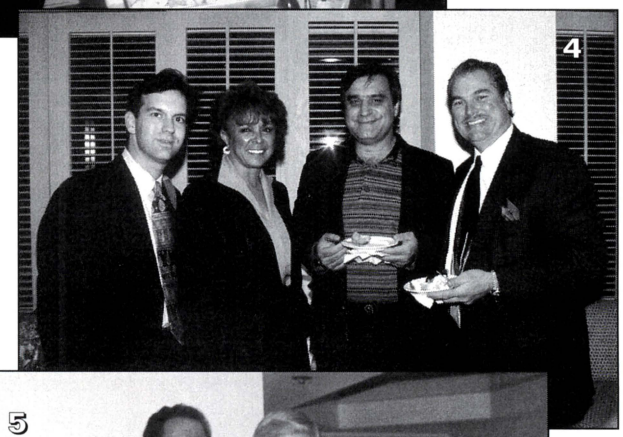
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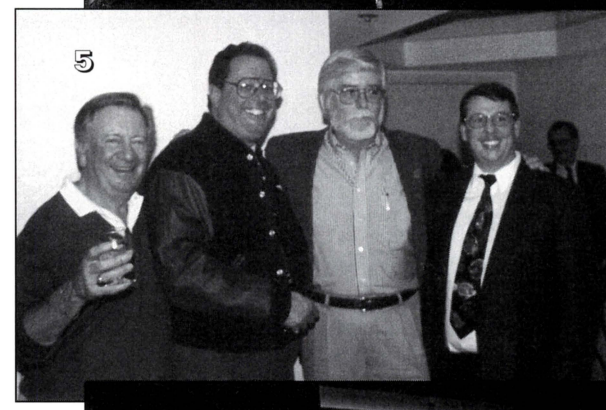
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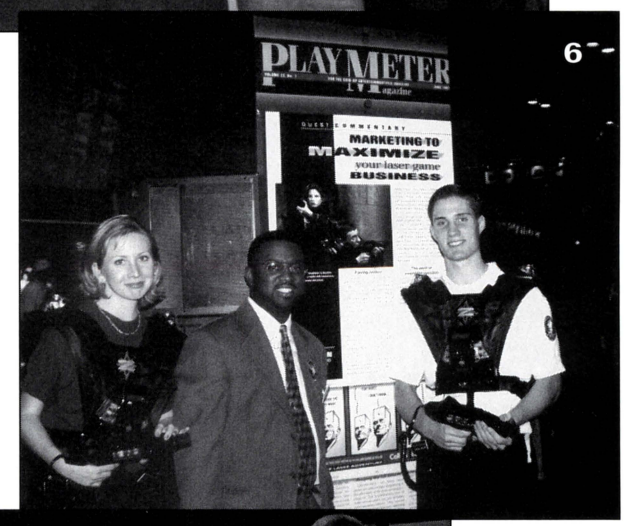

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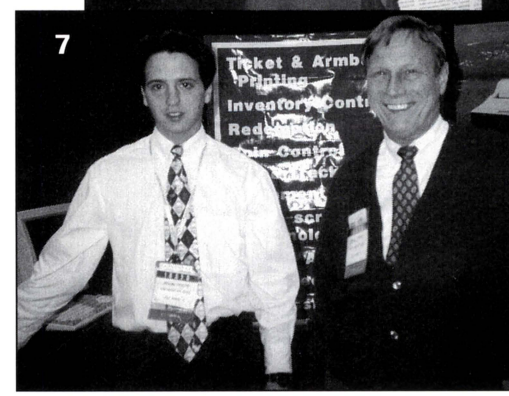
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BEYOND THE PLAYFIELD

tality suite she is congratulated by, (l-r): Steve White of Play Meter, a South American guest, and John Blouin of James Industries.

5 -- **JUKEBOX COMPETITORS** were comrades at the Andreu International hospitality suite. From left: Rex Yannarell and Joel Friedman of Rowe International, Glenn Streeter of Rock-Ola, and Jurgen Jost of NSM.

6 -- **ULTRAZONE STAFF** members stand by a blow-up of a June '97 article in Play Meter titled, "Marketing to maximize your laser game business" that featured the laser tag company. From left: Melanie Thiele, Kelsey West, and Joseph Losinski.

7 -- **"SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS"** were the buzzwords at the Touch It booth, where Jason (l) and Jerry Foote explained their program for complete facility management and inventory product tracking.

8 -- **THE SHOW WASN'T ALL EXHIBITS.** Over 47 educational workshops were on the agenda, including one called "Playology, the Re-engineering of Fun," which invited the audience to get in touch with the child inside.

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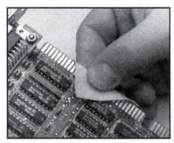

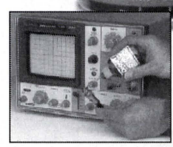

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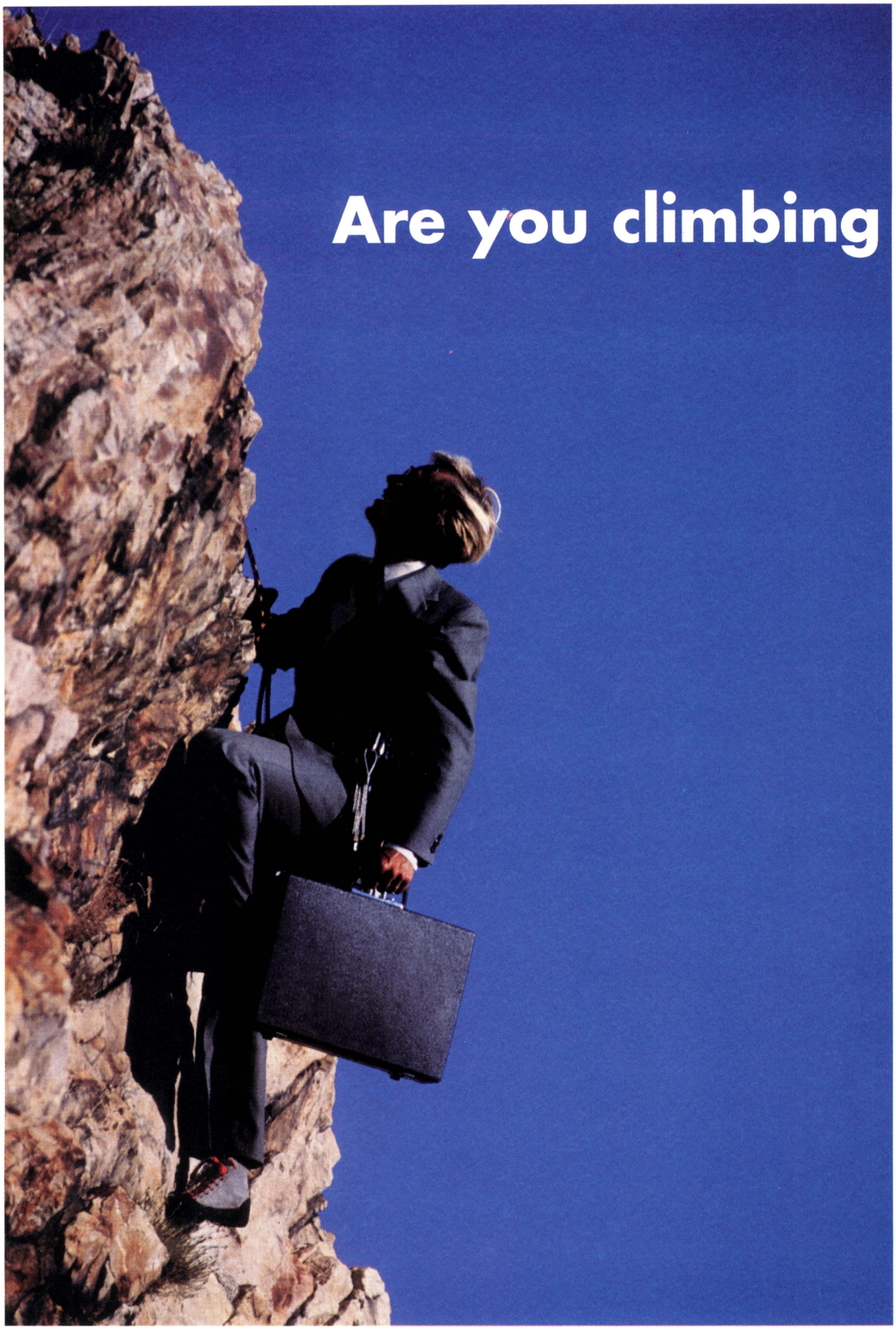
Clowning around before the seminar, (l-r): Mark Weston and Denise Chapman Weston of SCS Interactive and Ben Jones of RECreation Inc. The overall message: think out of the box, be creative, and look at things differently. Also—play invigorates, play brings opportunities to discover, and play is a place where parents and kids can meet.

GAMING TRADE:

9 -- **CASHCODE'S** Val Levitan (r) presents a gift certificate to Eric Fernandez of Miccosukee Indian Gaming at the World Gaming Congress last fall. The gift certificate was for dinner at Buzio's at the Rio Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nev., and part of a promotion titled, "A Hundred Clams Says You'll Stop By Our Booth." It was a tie-in with the company's new ad campaign that features clams to show the benefits of the CashCode bill validator's patented clamshell design. Other gift certificates were won by Laurie Gotshall of Bally Gaming and Scott Henneman of International Gamco/Oasis Technology. ▲



Are you climbing mountains that you don't need to?

Premier Data Corporation, the company that offers scalable software solutions to the coin-op industry, wants you to know that you don't have to climb the mountain to enjoy the view from the top. In anticipation of your needs—from route and arcade management software to customization, from desktop to client/server solutions—we are working hard to make your business decisions easy. Premier Data Corporation providing a new generation of software.

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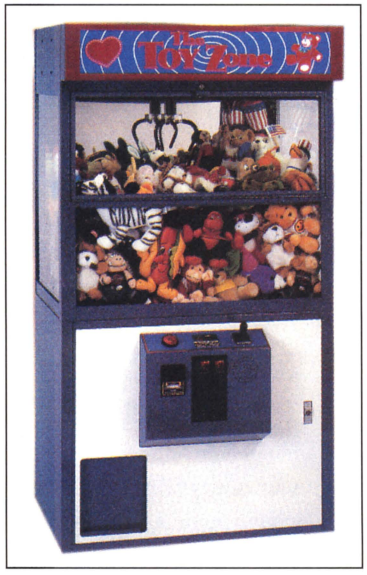
The Toy Zone

Players can get "in the fun zone" when they step up to Advanced Games & Engineering's new skill crane, *The Toy Zone*. The attractive machine is specially designed with galvanealled steel cabinetry and the added attraction of special lighting, a neon gel sign, and sound effects.

Other features include a rear chute to discourage forward tilt cheating, easy loading front window, separate eight-way joystick and drop claw controls, prize counter, dual coin mechs with inside cash box, and bill validator with stacker. Dimensions are 40" wide x 32" deep x 77" high.

Plenty of storage space is afforded with the high-security recessed T-handle lower service door. The game, which is controlled by a single motherboard with no fuses or potentiometers, has seven operator-programmable features.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact A.G.E., 1231 N.E. Eighth Ave., Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33304; (954)527-0907; fax (954)527-0226; Web site (http://www.advancedgames.com).



Off Road Challenge

The adventure of racing just jumped up a few notches and moved to exciting new off road locales such as the Mojave desert, Pikes Peak, and the Baja. Midway Games has added a new element to racing competition with the rough and unusual terrain featured in its new video simulator, *Off Road Challenge.*

Six fantasy tracks are featured, from sand and rocks to blizzards and steep mountains. Players interact with the environment and attempt advanced driving maneuvers, power slides and jumps, to conquer the territory.

Racing icon Ivan Stewart was on hand for consultation during the game's design. His input added significantly to the game's realism, and his name is instantly recognized by racing fans. *Off Road Challenge* shares the same hardware system and cabinet as *Cruis'n World.* Up to four games can be linked together.

Players who finish first are rewarded with a trip to the Speed Shop where they can add to the attributes of their vehicle in time for the next race. Enhancements include acceleration, speed, shocks, and tires. Players can also choose to pay to enter the Speed Shop—an option that has added to game earnings.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Midway Games Inc., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (773)961-1000; fax (773)961-1060; Web site (http://www.midway.com).

Fun-E-Ball

Fun Industries combines the appeal of a maze and the desire for a prize into a new novelty game and vendor, *Fun-E-Ball.* The steering wheel control and the neon colors are reminiscent of the company's successful game *Steer Crazy* which challenges dexterity.

In *Fun-E-Ball*, players have to work their prize (gumballs, puzzle balls, and superballs) around a maze to find the exit and retrieve the prize. Within the maze are moving parts such as shelves, elevators, and rotating holes that give the game a kinetic feel. A bonus hole lights up periodically to give players a bonus prize if they get their prize into the hole when the light is on.

Players use the steering wheel to change the axis of the playfield and move the prize. Whimsical cartoon graphics and sound effects complete the package. Dimensions are 24" deep x 72" high.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Fun Industries, 627 15th Ave. E. Moline, IL 61244; (800)747-1144 or (309)755-5021; fax (309)756-1684.

VideoNet

National Electronic Technologies presents *VideoNet*, a public Internet terminal providing online entertainment and communication in a commercial setting. The unit offers access to the World Wide Web, e-mail, chat functions, and a full motion video message service.

With an easy-to-navigate interface featuring crisp graphics and help screens, customers are only a touch away from surfing the Web, checking their e-mail, or playing games. The top portion of the main screen contains revolving advertisements and contest information.

***VideoNet's* V-mail allows customers to send a full motion video message up to one minute long to anyone in the world as long as the recipient has an e-mail address. The unit also offers easy-to-use links to most popular topics such as news, sports, weather, and stock quotes as well as a simple search page.**

Dimensions are 20.5" high x 17.5" deep x 24" wide. It weighs 85 lbs. and is equipped with: video camera, 15-inch touch screen, Mars bill and coin acceptors, handset for privacy, easy slideout tray for service, 16-bit dual speaker sound, and one-year warranty on all components. Credit, debit, and smart card readers are optional.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact National Electronic Technologies, P.O. Box 4792, 127 Old Hampton Hwy., Rothesay, NB Canada E2E 5X5; (506)847-4969; fax (506)847-0043; e-mail (info@natel.ca); Web site (http://www.natel.ca).

San Francisco Rush: The Rock

Atari Games has released *San Francisco Rush: The Rock, Alcatraz Edition* which builds on excitement generated by the original *San Francisco Rush* while adding a wealth of new tracks, cars, and shortcuts. It is available as both a dedicated game in Atari's new two-piece single-seat cabinet or as a conversion kit.

Rush The Rock showcases four new tracks including the deluxe Alcatraz Stunt Track, four new cars, dozens of new shortcuts, new music, and a host of other new features and improvements in addition to all the features that helped make the first game a classic.

One of the new options, mirrored track mode, allows players to select an alternate version of their track that makes each a new driving experience. These features should excite fans of the original game and bring in new players.

Linking hardware will be included with every new game allowing *Rush The Rock* to be linkable for two units right out of the box. Only *Rush The Rock* games may be linked together. A hub kit will be available for linking three or more games. While supplies last, every operator purchasing a dedicated or kit version of the game will be eligible to receive a free tournament package.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Atari Games, 675 Sycamore Dr., Milpitas, CA 95035; (408)434-3700; fax (408)434-3776; Web site (http://www.atarigames.com).

Officer Owl

National Entertainment Technologies presents *Officer Owl*, a prize vending machine which employs visual animation and electronic speech to appeal to a core audience of small children.

The unit is fun and easy to operate; customers just pop in a coin or token and the character inside revolves, produces electronic speech, and lays a colorful plastic egg containing a small toy or candy. A prize is vended on every play. The machine has a 1,200 capsule capacity.

Officer Owl also draws on the current trend of edutainment or education-related entertainment by delivering a message of "please say no to drugs and alcohol" and interacting with the young customers by asking them several questions. Messages and questions can be customized.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact National Entertainment Technologies, P.O. Box 648, Marshfield, MO 65706; (800)458-4116; fax (417)859-2902; Web site (http://www.quikpage.com/n/net).

Egg Venture

Not since Humpty Dumpty has an egg been the center of so much attention.

You'll be a good egg (excuse the pun) if you can master the 38 different scenes that challenge players to the eggspert level (there we go again) in the one- or two-player competitive shooting video game *Egg Venture* from Innovative Concepts in Entertainment.

The industry is ready for a lighthearted theme and this kit fills that need. The smiling egg characters that are the targets appear in Western garb and other appropriate attire to suit each scene. Successful hits can mean the little guys are all cracked up!

The kit includes two side decals, start buttons, and red and blue guns with holsters; main PCB; marquee overlay; control panel overlay; and audio power amp.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact I.C.E., 10123 Main St., Clarence, NY 14031; (716)759-0370; fax (716)759-0390; e-mail (play@icegame.com).

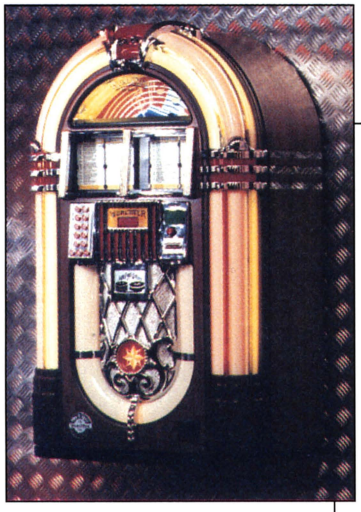
One More Time Princess

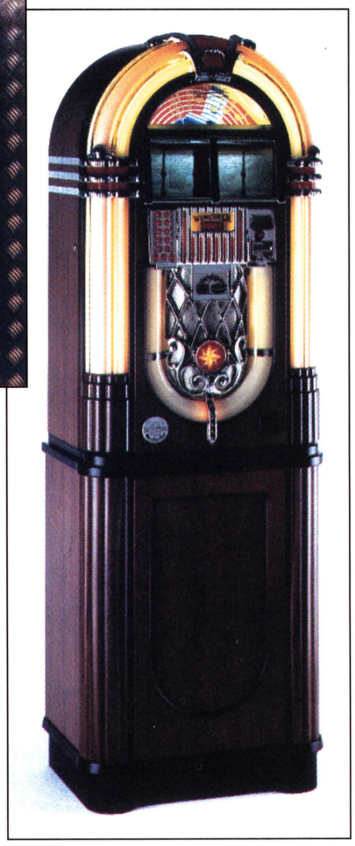
Are you looking for a wall jukebox with classic lines, a compact profile, every extra in the book, and a good resale value? Wurlitzer answers the quest with its *One More Time Princess* wall unit that satisfies small space requirements.

This model features an ultra-fast CD delivery and play system, internal test speaker, programmable play stimulator, quick view selection process, internal problem-solving diagnostics, E-Z access speaker connections, three function remote, and programmable background mode.

In addition, *One More Time Princess* plays CD tracks or an entire album, has a capacity of 120 discs, and has RCA outputs for another amp. An optional pedestal with the same detailing is available. Dimensions are 40" high, 23" wide, and 17" deep; weight is 172 lbs. Wall-mounting hardware is included.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Wurlitzer Jukebox Co., 235 Moonachie Road, Moonachie, NJ 07074; (201)807-2616; fax (201)807-9543; Web site (http://www.wurlitzer-jukebox.com); e-mail (bubbles@wurlitzer-jukebox.com).





Intune

Thanks to Intune Inc. there is a whole new way to select CDs. The interactive CD merchandising machine also called *Intune* lets customers view available CDs, choose a title, and listen to individual songs using built-in headphones.

Selections can be chosen by using the custom control panel that allows selecting a disc and song and adjusting volume. Once the decision is made, customers can pay via cash or credit card.

Features include a coin mech and bill validator that accepts $1-5-10-20 bills, infinite price setting, programmable message center, detailed instruction manual, modular design for easy service, adjustable shelving, and a one-year warranty on all parts. Dimensions are 34.5" wide x 35" deep x 72" high.

Among suggested locations are bookstores, nightclubs, concert halls, video stores, groceries, theaters, hotels and resorts, theme restaurants, military bases, truck stops, and universities.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Intune Inc., 4100 N.E. Second Ave., Suite 202, Miami, FL 33137; (800)6-INTUNE or (305)573-2820; fax (305)573-3546; Web site (http://www.intuneinc.com).

Street Hoops

P & E Technologies sounds the buzzer for its new *Street Hoops* basketball-themed game which allows for instant sports prize dispensing, 50-cent play, and self-percentaging.

Players are challenged to shoot ping-pong-size basketballs into various hoops with different point values. Playing against the clock and to the beat of music and arena sounds, the player must sink shots and score the required number of points to win. Bonus lights move from basket to basket.

The game can be configured for street locations, dispensing an instant prize, or for family entertainment centers, dispensing tickets. A super ticket award for beating the current high score is designed to increase player appeal. Other features include a winner-every-time mode, small footprint, front load chute, and operator-adjustable pricing up to $1 per play.

A built-in prize dispenser can vend capsules as large as three inches in diameter providing operators a greater amount of flexibility in determining prizes. Specially designed pre-packs already loaded in capsules are available directly from P & E.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact P & E Technologies, 500 Central Ave., Atlantic Highlands, NJ; (732)872-9800 or (800)979-9801; fax (732)872-0003.

Global Touch HD

Micro Mfg. debuts its hard drive-based *Global Touch HD* touch screen multigame unit that is available in both countertop and upright configurations.

Featuring innovative adult theme games with full motion video of both men and women, hot new games, and exciting new trivia categories with thousands of new questions, the system offers all of the benefits of a CD-ROM in a more durable and reliable configuration.

***Global Touch* games are easy to update and enhance for years to come. The unit is also available as an upgrade kit for existing *Magical Touch* systems.**

For more information, or distributor referral, contact Micro Mfg., 535 Old Nashville Hwy., Lavergne, TN 37086; (615)793-5510 or (800)277-6136; fax (615)793-5512; e-mail (microvp@aol.com); Web site (http://www. micro.hotcc.com).

Sticker Station

American Photo Booth Inc.(APBI) introduces its *Sticker Station* photo sticker vending unit which taps into one of the fastest growing collectible crazes in the country. Players simply pose for a photo and in less than a minute receive 16 peel-off stickers bearing their likeness that can be used to personalize a wide variety of objects.

An extensive choice of backgrounds for the photo stickers is available and includes everything from the White House, the Statue of Liberty, and Cinderella's castle to a dinosaur or jungle scene, cartoon characters from Warner Bros., and generic items such as smiling faces, flowers, puppies, and rainbows.

Sticker Station runs on a $3 vend, takes no coins, utilizes proprietary technology, is wheelchair accessible, and features a button-control high-resolution camera with zoom and tilt control functions.

For more information, or distributor referral, contact APBI, 801 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria, VA 22314; (703)519-5656; fax (703)519-5759; Web site (http://www.stickerstation.com). ▲

EYE ON
ASIA

JEFF **BLAIR** and
TONY **YEH**

CHINA'S *Changing Landscape*

Keeping the people in our world entertained these days is similar to deciding what to have for dinner every night, you just get tired of the same stuff. Not that amusement companies are only producing the same themes, but the technology has advanced so rapidly that players are spoiled.

The developing market in China is perhaps one area where there is still lots of room to entertain the players. However, this market certainly has taken its 'sweet ole time' developing. Like most things that take time, the payoff will be pretty brisk if all the early footwork continues to take hold. It seems that right now, true amusement machines are popular!

Several years ago, companies outside of China began to visualize department stores for the people in the mainland that would be similar to what's been done in other countries. Shortly after, actual construction began and their idea caught on. Not that this was a revolutionary concept, but for China it was definitely new. The stores simply combine shopping, food courts, and family entertainment. Now if this idea has intrigued China's huge population, imagine what the games that are available will do for their entertainment?

No one is about to predict that China will be the next popular market, but some of the indicators suggest that this will be a very steady, growing business for the amusement industry.

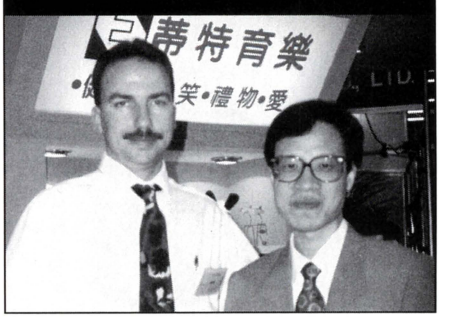
The government is encouraging larger fun centers instead of traditional smaller arcades. Developers of the new shopping centers are reserving more and more space for entertainment centers and food courts. And, a five-day work week is a government regulation for its people. This became effective last year so this should also add to the popularity of amusement games. Theoretically, more funds and the need for more leisure time will be necessary for the Chinese people.

"Eye on Asia" certainly doesn't want to mislead any readers by hinting that this emerging market will be the place to be. We only want to report the changes that are taking place throughout Asia in the amusement industry. Lately, more and more Japanese companies have started to build their own centers in China, which suggests that they see a good potential market there. Additionally, where most games being operated were used machines, the mix has settled into roughly a 50/50 split between new and used. This indicates that the market is not only growing, but the money needed to operate entertainment centers is there.

Speaking of the financial situation, what about the recent disaster running wild everywhere in Southeast Asia? Well, it hasn't affected China too much according to those who have their hands (not to mention their wallets) in developing the market there. They believe that because China continues its open-economics policy, that the growth throughout the country will continue to be steady.

Our people in Asia will continue to keep a close eye on China's developing market and report back those conditions. If nothing else, readers get some insight into Asia's amusement industry. If you step back and consider the world as a whole, no matter where people live, they just want to have fun! ▲

Entropy International and Entropy USA have been in the amusement industry for more than 20 years. Tony Yeh is vice president of marketing for the international company and Jeff Blair is the chief operating officer for the USA group. Entropy is involved in the design and manufacture of coin-op games and parts. They can be reached at (908)506-0002; (800)241-0633; e-mail (entropyusa @sprynet.com); Web site (entropyusa.com).



PEOPLE WILL BE COMING TO THE ASI SHOW FROM ALL OVER THE EARTH. AND ONE GUY'S COMING FROM EVEN FURTHER AWAY.

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Mission Crane boasts of being the world leader in the manufacture, operation, and product management of skill cranes. The company is totally dedicated to providing its customers with absolutely the finest craftsmanship, most precise mechanisms, highest quality plush toys, and unparalleled on-site service.

President
Mike Lewis

As a manufacturer and operator, Mission Crane cares about the image and satisfaction of all its customers, which include local street operators, the nation's largest family restaurant chain, and the happiest place on earth.

Mission skill cranes are built like fine furniture and constructed using only the highest quality craftsmanship. These cranes are designed for those who care about their image whether its traditional, colonial, frontier, southwestern, contemporary, or other custom motifs. These cranes can even be elegantly personalized and customized for a specific location with corporate logos, colors, etc.

The most obvious example of Mission Crane's talent for building its cranes like furniture is demonstrated by the materials—fine solid oak, cherrywood, mahogany, pine, and other contemporary materials. No formica or veneer—just solid wood. Each crane is perfected with a richly stained finish, various gold accents, and stunning stained and beveled glasses with graphics that create lasting beauty. Inside each cabinet is the same quality with a state-of-the-art mechanism and high quality engineering. The company claims its cranes have the largest claw and prize box in the industry.

Vice president of sales
and marketing
Glenn Kassel

Precise engineering

Mission is proud to say that its engineers' attention to detail is unparalleled. The technology and precise engineering provides for years of reliability, easy maintenance, and quiet operation. Look inside to find an all-metal powder coated chassis; the finest motors; high impact, long-lasting Delrin running gear and wheels; and a single source, state-of-the-art computer. Mission says it's a crane built by an operator for operators.

All Mission cranes comply with safety standards for Electric Amusement Machines and meet or exceed ANSI/UL-22 standards for overall safety, while requiring only a convenient 110 volt outlet. And there's more: all cranes are made with tempered safety glass, the highest quality copper wire, powder coated aluminum extrusion and cabinetry that's built to last.

Rigorous testing and certification by ETL Laboratories has helped to confirm Mission Crane's commitment to making sure its players enjoy themselves risk free. Additionally, each of the units hold a valuable "Games of Skill" certification from the National Games Laboratory, which is a division of Bob Snyder & Associates, the industry's popular expert consultant. Mission Crane notes that its cranes were the first to obtain the certification.

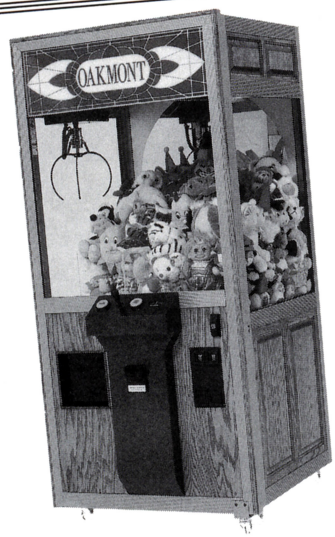
Chief financial officer
Shelli Lewis

The operator program

Mission Crane customers are convinced. "The program still seems too good to be true," said Tom Roberts, a franchisee of Perkin's Family Restaurants. "I've been able to provide my customers with fun, wholesome entertainment for absolutely no investment. The income is phenomenal and Mission does all the work. I have personalized, upscale, solid wood cranes at no cost to me, high-quality toys, and a great service team to merchandise the machines daily."

Mission's sales and marketing vice president Glenn Kassel explained the program Roberts is so excited about. "Mission secures locations, mainly family-oriented national restaurant chains, all over the country, and then qualifies local operators to manage the accounts," Kassel said. He added that parents, grandparents, and children alike enjoying play-

COVER STORY



Oakmont is Mission's most popular crane model. It's the most explicit example of "built like fine furniture."

For those who prefer American traditional furniture, Mission has gone patriotic with the beautifully crafted *Colonial* model.

Oh, how we love mahogany on the *Fairmont* model.

Real cowpokes play skill cranes and they'll love the *Frontier* model shown here.

For those locations where the colors and theme of the southwest are preferred, the *Santa Fe* model is just right.

Don't be surprised if you see Mission Crane's *Premier* skill crane in the lobby at the Academy Awards or in other upscale locations.

Press Release

American Changer introduces it's FREE PLAY coupon.

A promotional tool with applications for everything from the largest F.E.C. to small game rooms at the local hotel.

You can now set your American Changer to accept your personalized **FREE-PLAY** coupon and give out the same number of tokens as if the customer would have inserted a $1.00 bill.

If you are giving 4 tokens per dollar, when your personalized **FREE-PLAY** coupon is inserted your customer will recieve 4 tokens as if he had inserted a $1.00 bill. Likewise if you have your American Changer set to dispense 6 tokens per dollar accepted your American Changer will give 6 tokens if a **FREE-PLAY** coupon is inserted.

For those large F.E.C. with special promotions you can have a dedicated American Changer that accepts **FREE-PLAY** coupons only and for every **FREE-PLAY** coupon accepted you can preset the changer to give out up to 31 tokens.

What a great promotional tool.

If you have a large group coming in for a birthday party you can give them one or two **FREE-PLAY** coupons as part of the promotional package to get them started.

It can be used in a mailer to local residences in your area. A hotel with a game room can give one free play coupon to every child in the family as an incentive to get them to the game room.

A local pizza shop could use them in a mailer to get people to come in and play one of the video games as they wait for their order.

The possibilities are endless...

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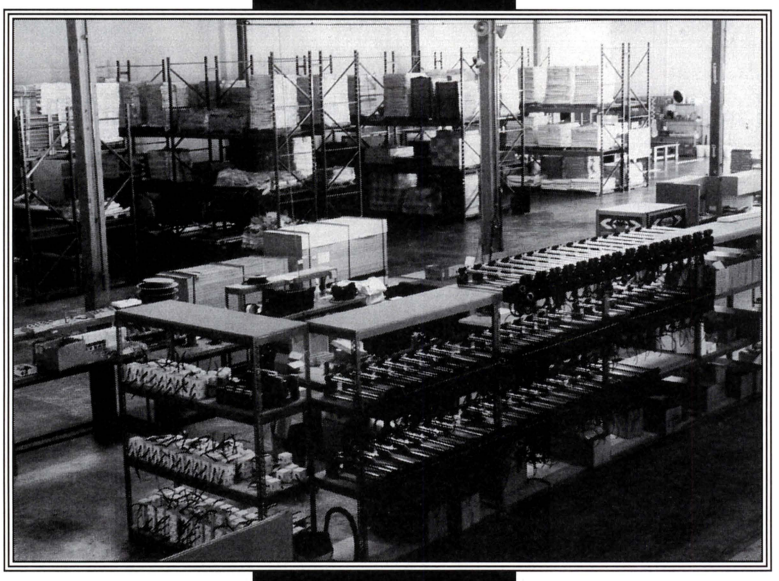


Soon to outgrow its factory in Anaheim, Calif., Mission Crane plans to move to a larger 100,000-square-foot facility this year.

ing and being entertained by Mission's cranes. He noted that the average player is about 45 years old. Why? Because a Mission crane provides a fair, wholesome, clean, quiet, and inexpensive way for a family to participate together in an entertaining game of skill.

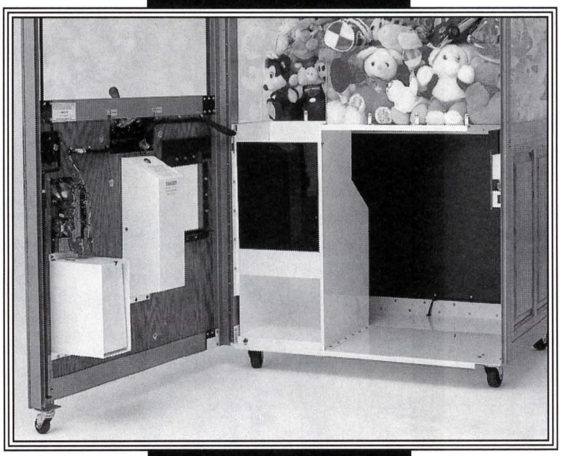
Kassel continued, "After we identify who we want to approach, we court the appropriate corporate personnel and conduct location tests for 60-90 days. Once we get the equipment in place, we always hear positive comments, and locations are genuinely surprised that they experience no problems. Just the play itself, and winning a plush toy, heightens customers' experiences at our client's establishments."

We asked president Mike Lewis what he wants the world to think of when they think of a Mission Crane. He didn't hesitate, "When people think of Mission Crane we want them to think of the word quality. I have worked hard to build a group of team players who have a passion for the business. The entire Mission Crane team is devoted and dedicated to producing the finest quality equipment for our customers."

Mission Crane, founded in 1989, has a team that knows the crane industry, according to Lewis. "Being both a manuacturer and an operator gives us a unique advantage," he said. "We are able to field test any proposed changes to our equipment before implementing them system-wide. When operators purchase Mission cranes, we believe they are purchasing the most trouble-free, best built crane in the industry."

Lewis told us that Mission has location support and distribution covered too. "Nobody trains service technicians and operators better than we do," he offered. "Our program affords operators a unique opportunity to work with large and national accounts. Those accounts can count on uniformity of service coverage anywhere in the country with a single point of contact." He added that uniformity is especially important to the image conscious customers in the dining, hospitality, and entertainment industries.

Lewis continued, "We negotiate and secure the accounts and work with our group operators to handle the service requirements. Group operators provide the machines to the locations, service the accounts frequently (an average of five times per week), use Mission's mix of plush toys, and maintain insurance at specified coverage levels."



A look inside shows fully secure coin and bill boxes, including a bill stacker which is standard equipment. Also visible is the extra large storage area and easy access to all electronic components.

Mission Cranes are now found in large national accounts like Denny's (1,200 at last count), Perkin's Family Restaurants, Ponderosa Steakhouses, and others. The company also has traditional locations like supermarkets, FECs, and Disneyland (we told you they were in the happiest place on earth). "We're looking to increase our account base by 3,000 in 1998," Mike shared.

Business has been so good for Mission Cranes that it plans to open 13 regional offices by mid-1998. Recently, offices have become operational in Miami, Dallas, Orlando, Phoenix, and Sacramento to handle route operations and local sales.

For more information on Mission Crane's product or Group Operator Program, contact them at (800)692-2529 or (714)456-0550. ▲

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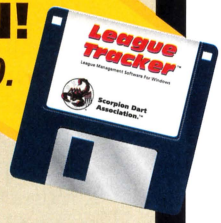

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VALERIE COGNEVICH

RICHARD M. BUESCHEL

THE NAME RICHARD BUESCHEL MAY NOT BE QUITE AS FAMILIAR AS SAY HARRY WILLIAMS, SAM STERN, OR STEVE KORDEK, BUT HE'S THE ONE PERSON WHO CAN TELL YOU JUST ABOUT ANYTHING YOU WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE ROOTS OF THE COIN MACHINE INDUSTRY. IN FACT, HE HAS TOLD THE STORY IN SEVERAL BOOKS LIKE "ILLUSTRATED HISTORICAL GUIDE TO PINBALL MACHINES" AND "ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PINBALL" TO NAME JUST TWO OF HIS WORKS.

Richard is as comfortable talking about games that date back to Marie Antoinette as he is talking about *Pac-Man.* And he knows all the details in between! When you ask Richard why he wanted to delve into the industry's past so deeply, he'll explain that he wanted the industry to know its own history. "You forget or you don't really know how it evolved," he said.

Richard was recently featured on a New Video Images production called "Pleasure Machines, The History of Pinball" which also included a number of notable pinball figures. The video declares that "everybody's played the game...but nobody knows the story!!"

Whatever the reason he decided to undertake such an exhaustive search for the industry's past, we're glad he did. Here he tells us how the coin machine industry entered his life. But once you're hooked on the history of this magical industry, you can continue to read about it in Richard's latest books.

What was your first exposure to the coin-op industry?

I was born in 1926, a golden time for our country. Of course, I grew up during the '30s which was a golden time for the coin machine industry, but not so good for the country. During the Depression, the only companies that were hiring were in the coin-op business. I remember people coming from all over the country to get a job at Mills Novelty Co. They paid 35 cents an hour, and during the Depression those jobs were in great demand.

Did you work for Mills Novelty?

No, but although I didn't work there, I was aware of it as a kid. There were three plants and the company had a baseball team. Rock-Ola also had a team and they played games against each other on a field just for them. The games were fun for us kids to watch. As a kid I remember enjoying the games, and we looked up to the coin machine companies.

What was the coin machine industry like back then?

Although it was sometimes thought to be associated with the Mafia, that wasn't the case. Crime does not like payrolls and inventory. A lot of people were in awe of the companies because of the baseball teams, the jobs, and the games they put out. It was all positive.

Most of the people in the industry lived on the west side of Chicago where I had a newspaper route. Of course, Chicago was the coin machine capital of the world. I delivered the paper, I believe it was "The Austin" to Herbert Mills of Mills Novelty and some other industry people.

Did you ever think you'd like to be in the coin machine industry?

No, I didn't really think about it then. After graduating from high school in 1944 I joined the service and was waiting to be an aviation cadet. But just before graduating I crossed paths with the industry. Some buddies and I took a bicycle trip around Lake Michigan. It was the first time I was ever away from home so naturally it was exciting. We rode probably 600 miles. We ended up in a little town in Michigan called Pin Water. Just outside of the town was Bass Lake where one of my friends had vacationed with his folks. We got jobs as waiters at a resort on Bass Lake.

I vividly recall the Mills *War Eagle* on the counter. I absolutely fell in love

with the thing. The owner told me that it was jammed and wouldn't play anymore. I told him that I could fix it so he let me take it apart. He probably shouldn't have! I was up all night trying to figure it out. About five the next morning I got the jam fixed. He was so impressed he told me that I was going to operate it for him.

When the tourists arrived there'd be a phone call from town, and he'd lift the machine from behind the counter and put it on the counter. It was a 10-cent Mills *War Eagle* slot machine.

Weren't slot machines illegal?

Of course! But he also had a Chicago Coin *Four Roses* pinball machine. It's where I really learned to play pinball. You started playing and felt like you became part of the machine. If I had to pick a time when I fell in love with pinball it would have to be that summer. What a wonderful time for a kid. It was then that I realized what entertainment value you got for your money on a pinball machine.

You spent the summer there, then what did you do?

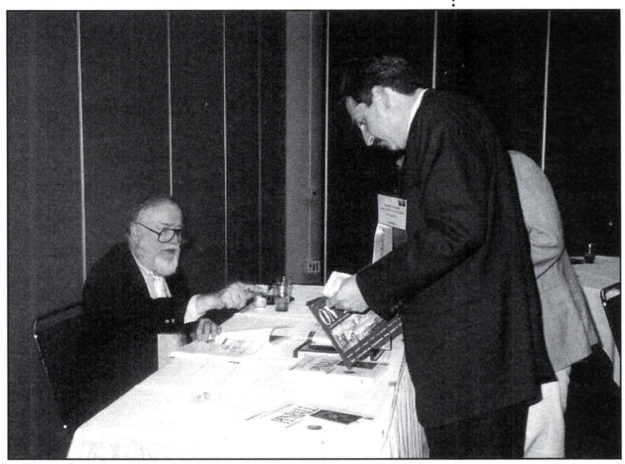
I went in the Air Force and was sent to Germany. Germany had a big coin machine industry too, especially the German foosball. I was exposed to quite a variety of machines and I loved playing games. This brings me to a theory I have. Do you want to hear it?

Of course, I want to hear it.

Every animal has a niche. That's why kangaroos are in Australia and tigers are in Siberia. With humans it's a cultural niche. And the best part is that our niche is portable. That's why we can live in the ice and snow or everywhere. Outer space is a perfect example of what I mean by a portable culture. We take our oxygen in oxygen tanks and we stock up on our food supplies and take it with us. It's the inventiveness in our culture that allows us to invent things that enable us to take our culture wherever we go. And it's our inventiveness that gives us games.

The first game designer was from Greek Mythology. He designed the labyrinth maze, a game for a king. Some may say that man is a tool making animal, but I say that man is a game playing animal. Even the North American Indians had a game called The Cross, which was a field hockey game. The ancient Mexicans played a form of basketball. They threw human heads through a loop.

Games and game playing can probably be traced back to man's beginnings. Where there's man, there's some kind of game. And it's the same today as it's always been—games relieve tension while giving you a whole new experience in life.



Dick Bueschel was the guest speaker at the Century Club meeting at the 1997 ASI show.

Let's see, we were at the point in your life when you were in Germany with the Air Force. What did you do next?

When I came back from Germany I had a job as a model plane kit designer. I first worked on model airplane kits when I was 15 and went back to it when I returned from Germany. We made wonderful airplanes. I did model planes for a dozen years. I have model planes in the Smithsonian in the Kettering Collection at the Air Force Museum. I built 129 of the models in that collection.

I always thought I was going to run a hobby shop during my life. But when I realized that model building was a matter of dexterity, I decided that if you decided to do that all your life, you wouldn't be able to do it all your life! Then I decided to change to an adventure of the mind—history. I wanted to know where stuff came from.

Is this what led to your interest in the coin machine industry?

I was fascinated with it. I began tracking down all the people I could and interviewed them. I did over 350 interviews with people who knew the history first-hand, as far back as the 1890s.

Do you remember the first person you interviewed?

It was Marie Mills, the daughter of Herbert S. Mills. He had told her all about his company, Mills Novelty Co. She was a real tough cookie with a sharp memory. Mills started in 1898 and lasted until 1952. It was bigger than any other company. It was a $16 million business in 1930. The company made jukeboxes, slot machines, pinballs—everything. It was a full-line manufacturer. Marie was a wealth of knowledge about not only her father's company, but the industry at the time.

What happened to Mills Novelty since it was such an all encompassing company?

It had a lot of internal problems. People were stealing money from them. Then Mills did a dumb thing. The company manufactured slot machines which they sold through distributors. Then they set up a separate company called Bell-O-Matic which became the exclusive distributor for Mills slot machines. Mills lost a lot of money after they did that.

Then they just whimpered out of business. Things were just going wrong. For instance, they made a Coke machine that was a disaster. Two bottles of Coke would be sent down the chutes at the same time and they'd smash together inside the machine. The Coca-Cola company frowned on that!

In studying the Mills Novelty Co. what would you say was its most impressive machine?

One was definitely its dice machine where the player threw dice under a glass. It was a marvelous machine. An-

other marvelous achievement for Mills was the diversification of pinball games. The company made the first electrified pinball.

Who else did you remember interviewing who made a lasting impression on you?

Eddie Ginsberg of Atlas Novelty in Chicago. He made pinball come alive. He was willing to take a chance. He took Stoner Mfg. (Aurora, Ill.) pinball games and put them on the map. At the time Stoner also did custom manufacturing for Chicago Coin.

Since you are familiar with about every game ever made, which ones would you name as making an impact on the industry?

One I'd certainly mention would be United's *ABC*. It was an in-line game that started the whole trend.

Were the in-line games also called bingo machines?

That's exactly right. The history of the industry is not only a story of the games, it's also a story of the people. This is an industry where two bad games in a row can mean you're out of business. Because of all the money it took to develop a game and advertise it, you just couldn't have two bad games in a row. Companies always lived on the edge of disaster. So when you ask them what was their best game, the answer will be "the next game!"

How many companies would you say were at the top of their profession and then went out of business?

There were 99 of them. One of the most notable was the Paul E. Berger Co. in 1893. It had copied a couple of Mills machines. The Paul E. Berger Co. was bought by a man named Ripley whose company was The White Mfg. Co. which lasted until about 1902. Then they went down because of the same old thing—two bad games in a row and the cost and risk were just too high.

How about more recent times?

Premier Technology's demise marked the end of the Gottlieb name that dated back to the '30s. As far as companies like Chicago Coin, the cost of developing games was so excessive they didn't get it back from the sale of the games. Allied Leisure in Florida had a similar situation. Many of the companies that folded found they simply couldn't see a profit once the development and marketing costs began to rise.

It's such a shame that some of the names, especially Gottlieb, are gone. Do you think that things are even harder now for manufacturers than they were in earlier days?

It's got to be much harder. The cost of the new technology is so expensive that if you don't have a proprietary advantage or a patent or two, you don't have anything. You are just copying someone else.

Here's Play Meter's Bonnie Theard (l) and Valerie Cognevich (r) with Dick Bueschel.

As far as players, are they expecting more from games than they did years ago?

Sure they are. But here's the thing about pinball: I believe there will be a pinball machine a thousand years from today because it has an advantage that no other game has—the ball is wild. Theoretically, if you're good at it you can keep that ball going for as long as you can. In a video game you're challenging a whole group of programmers. You're taking seconds of your mind to fight people who have had years of experience. And it's an unfair advantage. But with pinball you are in command. It's the only game that has that.

Will there ever be anything, like video games for instance, that will equal the impact pinball has had on the industry?

You can't equal pinball because the ball is wild. Whatever the game does, you do it. But pinball is also an American creation. Pinball is America's most significant contribution to coin machines.

Why do you think there weren't that many foreign pinball manufacturers making an impact in the United States?

It's the American psyche. We expect instant gratification and we're aggressive. Pinball is a courageous game. It takes courage to stand up to the machine, put money in, and say "I'm going to fight this thing!" Game designers in other countries don't understand that. However, there are a few foreign pinball manufacturers, but they haven't made an impact here. Also, if you look at their games, they copied American games.

Can you explain the evolution of the pinball machine?

The true history is traced back to Louis XIV's brother Count d'Artois who begged his brother to let him purchase lands called Chateau d' Bagatelle on the outskirts of town in 1775. He built a new Bagatelle which included a huge game room where guests played a game with new principles of play. Instead of shooting balls directly at the series of pockets from the baseline at the bottom of an inclined playfield, most of the shots had to be indirect because the pockets were hidden behind nails stuck in the playfield. It was the beginning of the mechanical amusement we now know as pinball. The count became King Charles X and was such a bad king that there was a second French Revolution in 1830.

Now that was the beginning of the modern pinball game. What came next?

Most people think of Bally's *Ballyhoo* as the first pinball game, but that was actually a form of bagatelle game like we saw in France. A man named Redgrave added a spring shooter and glass to a bagatelle game. Back in the 1920s and 1930s, pinball games were still called bagatelle games. You can see that in a *New York Times* index from that time. The games really weren't called pinball games until the 1930s. They were also called marble games in the early 1930s.

When was the name pinball first officially used?

In 1933 Mills Novelty introduced a game it called *Official Pinball*. The company spent quite a bit of money

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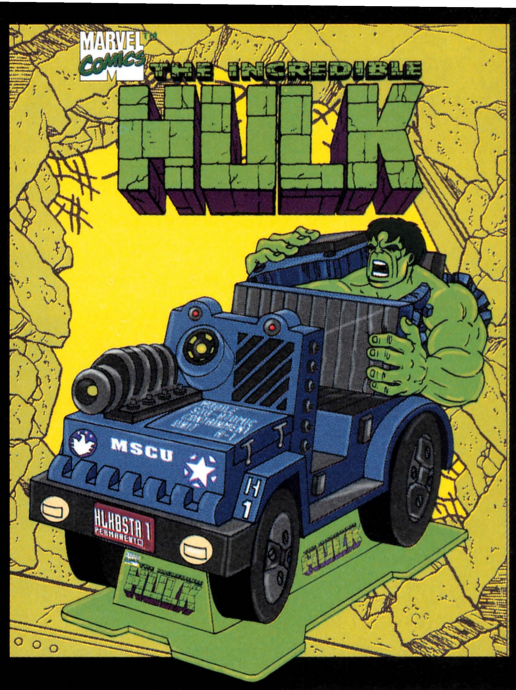

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promoting this game. When you heard the name *Official Pinball* it made the player think he was playing the real thing. It was a brilliant marketing move. There were three versions, one countertop and two tables.

Where are the bingo machines in the scheme of history?

Those came about the time of electrification, solenoids, and switches. Don Hooker of Bally is the one who did that. Then Lyn Durant of United, who copied whatever Bally did, came out with bingo machines.

What was the big news in the coin machine industry in the 1940s?

It had to be the introduction of the flipper. It was in October 1947 on *Humpty Dumpty* by Gottlieb. *Humpty Dumpty* was a very dull game to play, but the addition of flippers made it a skill game and obliterated any of the bad images that pinball had. You had to have skill to play. It was flippers that made pinball what we think of it today.

Then in the '50s there were the golden, wonderful, marvelous Gottlieb flipper games. They were the premier games in the industry. They had a whole kinetic experience. There were flippers, electricity, and lit backglasses with animation and all sorts of wonderful things going on.

In the '60s they went to steel rail games making them firmer, stronger, and more durable. In the '70s the big news was solid-state. Solid-state gave the game a great advantage because it took a lot of the weight out of the machine. Many thought it would take money out but it didn't because you could do so many new things. The technology was unlimited. It was at a point where if you could see it, you could do it. But putting solid-state components in a game was very expensive. Companies had to watch that they didn't run the cost up.

In the early '80s, there were pinball machines with video screens. What's the story on that?

You're supposed to watch the ball and play the game. You don't need other things to watch. Those hybrids were trying to be all things to all players; they weren't. Someone lost sight of the fact that pinball is a real bargain in entertainment anyway.

A note here to operators. If you're out servicing your machines, and you see a kid hanging around, put a buck in a pinball and let him play. He'll be back. And he'll bring his buddies with him.

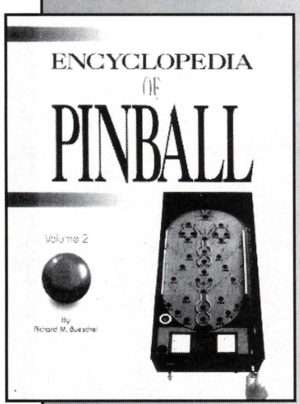
I hate to regress but I'm still interested in some of the interesting interviews you've done over the years.

A memorable one was with Herb Oettinger, the financial controller with Exhibit Supply Co. in 1937 when Harry Williams and Lyn Durant were the Dream Team designing games. Williams was the game designer and Durant was the electrical engineer. They made Exhibit Supply Co. games tops. They were very inventive. When Williams and Durant opened United, Oettinger went there as their financial advisor. For history buffs, Williams later broke off and started his own company which became Williams Electronics. He did that during the war and basically revamped older games by putting war-time themes on them. When he ran out of games to revamp and after the war was over, he started making his own games.

What other events in the coin machine industry stand out?

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PINBALL

by Richard M. Bueschell



Ever since Dick Bueschel's "Encyclopedia of Pinball: Vol. 1" was released in 1996, readers have wanted to know even more. The sequel has arrived. "Encyclopedia of Pinball: Vol. 2" is now available and includes 10 chapters covering 1934-1936. There are dozens of eyewitness accounts from the people who were there and those who remember. There are copies of original pinball flyers and lots of photos of pinball machines of the era.

Other books by Bueschel include:

Slot machines:
"Lemons, Cherries, and Bell-Fruit-Gum," "Mills Consoles," and "Payout Dice Machines."

Scales and other:
"Big Head Lollipop Scales" and "Arcade Sports Games."

Pinball games:
"Encyclopedia of Pinball."

Coin machines:
"Collector's Guide to Vintage Coin Machines," "Coin-Ops on Location," "Collector's Guide to Vintage Trade Stimulators and Counter Games," and "Collector's Guide to Vintage Coin-Operated Scales."

Music:
"Let the Other Guy Play It!"

These books are published by Silverball Amusements and distributed by The Pinball Resource, 8 Commerce St., Poughkeepsie, NY 12603; (914)473-7114; fax (914)473-7116.

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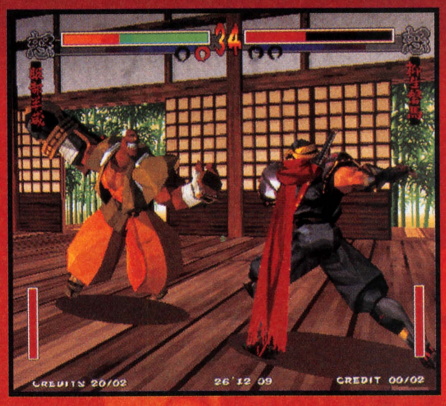

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Pace Mfg. with *Paces Races*, a console payout horse race game. At the height of the Depression in 1935 when no one had any money Pace Mfg. came out with *Paces Races* and sold it for $500. No one ever thought they'd sell these games. But the company almost guaranteed that the games would pay for themselves in a weekend. The first week some games were making $1,000 and people were saying, "By God they were right!" That would be a great game to have now, a great collector game. The serial numbers went over 10,000. Imagine that money!

What happened to Pace Mfg.?

That was a strange story. The owner was a funny guy. Every time he had a new machine, he'd buy new tools and sell everything out. So he never had any inventory of machines. The stuff went like popcorn. And that was fine as long as you were making enough money on every game you introduced. But as we know all too well that rarely happens in this industry.

How about other games that impacted the history of the industry?

Baffle Ball, which Gottlieb put out in 1931. The first pinball that sold for a lot of money was *Whiffle* out of Youngstown, Ohio. But you leased it and could never own it. Now Dave Gottlieb was selling *Baffle Ball* for $17.50. It would pay for itself in a weekend in pennies! Of course, the manufacturer of *Whiffle* thought that leasing the games would be the way to make the most money from them.

Another interesting game that made an impact on the industry was a Mills slot machine in February 1931. Up until that time slot machines made a tremendous amount of noise. Bert Mills, brother of Herbert Mills, redesigned the slot machine by adding rubber bumpers. Instead of going clunk, clang it was soft and quiet. They didn't make a lot of noise in a bar.

There seemed to be a lot going on in the coin machine industry in 1931!

You bet there was. The Depression drove it. At a time when you don't have any money you want to win something. If it wouldn't have been for the Depression there may not have been a major coin machine industry. In fact, if it hadn't been for Prohibition there may not have been a major coin machine industry. Prohibition literally drove music in the speakeasies of the day. Most of the jukebox manufacturers had player pianos in the speakeasies. Mills, for instance, was a big piano company. So were Rock-Ola and Seeburg before they converted to coin machines.

Moving ahead to more recent times, what games had an impact on the industry?

Pac-Man, of course. It was the first game that I know of that jumped from the coin machine industry to popular culture. Those figures became icons. There were T-shirts, pins, etc.

Another game was *Space Invaders.* I was at the AMOA show when they introduced it. The first day there were a couple of Japanese men playing the game but no one else seemed to take notice. The second day there were a few more. By the third day there was a mob scene. Midway had the license for it. It was surprising to see the Japanese come out with such wonderful games. I hated seeing all the money going to Japan for the ideas. We are supposed to have ideas, like Atari, which did some marvelous things.

You've mentioned some games that were memorable, but how about people?

The people in this industry are wonderful. They live long lives which means to me that they're happy in their work. I interviewed Dave Rockola many times and he was a delight and he loved what he was doing. Just one story about him: I asked him where the game *Jigsaw* came from. He told me that there was a speakeasy outside of Chicago where he used to have lunch. Jigsaw puzzles were a big fad at the time, so when you sat down they'd bring you a puzzle to work on. Well, he thought a jigsaw puzzle would be a great theme for a game. The Chicago World's Fair was going on about that time so he took a photograph of it out of a magazine and made a game from it. The photographer got wind of the game and told Dave that if he continued to use his stuff he'd sue him. Dave offered the pay the guy a royalty on the games, up to $2,500. Dave told me it was the best deal he ever made because the game made a fortune for him. A lot of people made a lot of money on that game.

Rock-Ola's next game was *World Series.* A guy from Rockford, Ill., brought in a game with a spinning disk but didn't know what to do with it. Dave said, "That's a baseball diamond." And he went on to pay the guy a royalty on the game. It became the biggest boomer ever.

Most people don't think of Rock-Ola except for jukeboxes. Was the company big in pinball?

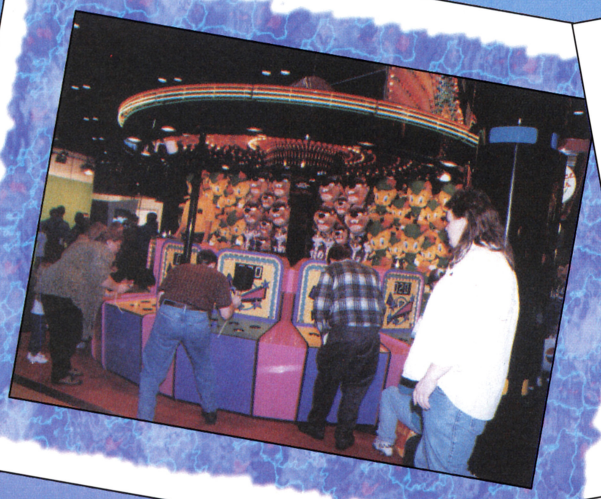
Rock-Ola started out in pinball. The company didn't start making jukeboxes until 1935. Pinball was big business before they converted to jukeboxes. Dave Rockola really had a hand in making the coin machine industry. He did such clever mechanical things. *Army/Navy* was a really clever football game. The ball would move up and down the field as the yardage moved. It was done with a bicycle chain.

Who are some other memorable people of the early coin machine days?

The Gensburg brothers and their company Genco come to mind. The major thing was that they hired Harvey Heiss. He played a major role in the industry with his wild, wonderful mind. He must be about 89 now. Then they hired Steve Kordek, who most people in the industry know. Steve's at Williams still working. What a role model he is for young men. He said he's going to retire, but why should he? He should stay in the ball game.

The video tape, Pleasure Machines: The History of Pinball, is wonderful for those in the industry or pinball players. Preliminary copies can be ordered by calling (800)875-VIDEO. The video was co-produced by Mark Helm and Howard Cook. Helm credits Dick Bueschel for getting the film off the ground. "If it wasn't for Dick, there would be no video," he said, adding, "When I got stumped on something, Dick was the one who helped me out. He's a walking history of pinball." We'll have more on the making of the video next month. ▲

AWESOME IAAPA



In the words of a song from the broadway play "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," the 79th Annual Convention and Trade Show of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions offered "something familiar, something peculiar, something for everyone" in the entertainment world. With an attendance figure of 31,500, IAAPA is clearly "the show of shows."

IAAPA '97

A young boy walked onto the exhibit floor, took one look around, and with eyes wide and mouth open exclaimed: "Ooooh!"

A bigger boy, International Association of Family Entertainment Centers president Harold Skripsky, paused at a booth and described the show: "Is there anything bigger than awesome?"

If you wanted to see midway games, outdoor rides, modular playground equipment, miniature golf course designs, currency and coin counters, security systems, laser tag, motion simulators, bulk vending units, prize merchandise, and have your photo taken atop life-size dolphins, you were in the right place.

If you wanted to sample piping hot pizza, frozen lemonade, cream-filled churros, roasted almonds, miniature doughnuts, barbecued beef, fresh-baked pretzels, and ice cream nuggets, you were in the right place.

And, if you wanted to see the latest in coin-op games you were in the right place.

"PICTURES DON'T DO IT JUSTICE. YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT UNTIL YOU SEE IT."

Increasingly, coin-op companies are holding new product introductions for IAAPA to take advantage of the huge audience, particularly on the international side. By coin-op standards the show is long at four days with show hours that extended from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. three of those days. An impressive list of educational workshops rounded out the show which also featured an Amusement Facility Management School and special evening events at Universal Studios Florida and Walt Disney World's Magic Kingdom.

While the attractions of Orlando cannot be discounted as a draw, IAAPA continues to grow no matter what the venue. According to Susan Mosedale, director of association relations, "Our biggest challenge is to communicate the size and scope of the show. Pictures don't do it justice. You don't believe it until you see it. We provide good, qualified buyers. Our exhibitors tell us we're doing a good job."

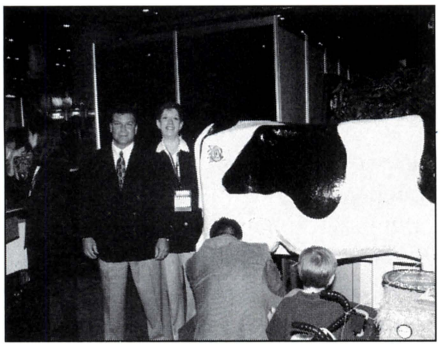
Mosedale added, "We really worked hard at marketing the show, registering through the Internet, for example. We have an international representative program that got the word out to our non-U.S. members. Their efforts really paid off. We went to different trade shows and advertised in new publications to reach new groups we haven't reached before. We were estimating 25,000 attendees and exceeded it." (The final figure—31,500.)

Fifty-three aisles were filled with products of every description, from custom imprinted ties and vests for promotions or employee uniforms (we loved the bagel tie and banana tie) to colorful costumed characters that could serve as mascots for fun centers. It is impossible to list all the types of displays that vied for attention. (High-tech products are covered in a separate article.)

Gordon Smart of Smart Industries put it simply: "This is a happy show. We get a lot of international business here." Mel LaForce of Fun Industries agreed: "There is a lot of international trade that makes this a must-go show for us."

Jane Adkins of Take Ten Corp. and the Brass Ring Carousel Co. said, "This is my favorite show, the one I really look forward to each year. Even though every-

IAAPA '97



Sega Pinball's Jolly Backer and Shelley Sax smile as a show attendee and his son try *Udderly Tickets*.

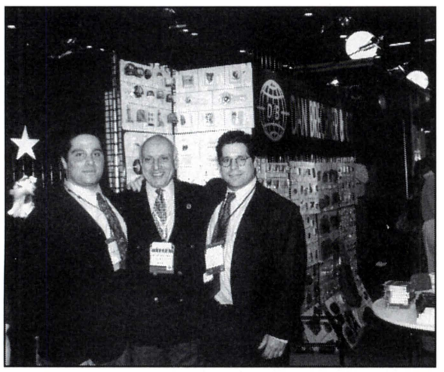
C.A. Robinson's Ira Bettelman and ICE's Chuck Morton go over an order.

"The women of Midway," (l-r): Lenore Sayers, Alma Perlido, and Rachel Davies.

At the Fun Merchants' booth, (l-r): Bill Seibert, Robert Betti, and Neal Rosenberg show off a hot new crane design.

Lazer Runner's group, (l-r): Jennifer, Troy Schnelle, Tara, Doug Wilson, and Kelly.

At the Fun Industries booth Mel LaForce (l) gets positive feedback from Benchmark Entertainment's Ron Haliburton on Mel's new *Fun-E-Ball*.



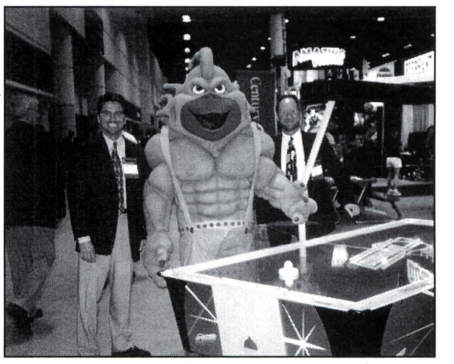
The Dan Brechner bunch, (l-r): David Rubinstein and Milton and Clifford Brechner.

NSM's Todd Martin (r) and T & M Distributing's Mike Riquier look over the new *Sapphire* jukebox.

From left: Thomson Entertainment's Dave Peadon, Steve Candler, and Graham Whitehead with the *Venturer S2i*.

Looking at SNK's *Roads Edge*, (l-r): Tip Top Amusement's Doug Minter, SNK's Jeff Yantz, and R.H. Belam's Bob Haim.

Smart Industries' Mike Smith (l) and Rodney Serbus with Smart's new *Prize Circus*.



Dynamo's Chris Brady (l) and Mick White (r) join an International Mascots character by the new *Hot Flash*.

thing does not apply to my type of business, there are so many ideas that can be modified. There is so much variety that you don't see anywhere else. You see total entertainment here, not just games."

AMOA president Don Hesch of A.H. Entertainers and first vice president Jim Stansfield of Stansfield Vending were walking the aisles. It was Hesch's first IAAPA. Both felt that the average operator would be overwhelmed at the show, although Hesch said perhaps some of the excitement could be contagious. "Most of the equipment is way too pricey for average operators," commented Stansfield.

Still, AMOA vice president Rich Holley of Southeast Game Brokers said, "The average street operator should get something out of this show but not everything. Street operators should be looking at other things. The key is constant add-ons. Challenge yourself and keep on going."

Fred Cyrway of Birmingham Vending, which had a booth at the show, added, "We encourage our street operator customers to come to this show. A lot of them are amazed because they see things you don't see at other shows. It gives you a lot of insight into the entertainment industry as a whole.

"If you've limited your world to pool tables, jukeboxes, and darts—so be it. But maybe it's time to try something different, such as bulk vending."

With so many shows on the fall schedule questions naturally arise: Why attend shows? How to choose? It's a matter of staying not only current but also ahead of the game as Alpha-Omega's Frank Seninsky, also AMOA treasurer, commented: "We came here to see new things. Some may not hit the market for five years, but we will know about them."

Joe Camarota of Alpha-Omega noted, "Demographics are changing in this country. The coin-op industry has always been in a supporting role, being a secondary source of entertainment. The shows are important because there are things for everyone. You need other elements to supplement your business. You can't forget about that. You have to mold things to fit your circumstances."

Blair Norris of Brady Distributing said, "We attend all of these shows. IAAPA is a great show that opens up new avenues for our type of business."

Several coin-op industry folks were a bit downhearted about the slowdown in business. Ken Fedesna of Williams Bally/Midway, said, "We have to do something to get people back in the arcades and street locations. All segments of the industry have to work together. It's about time something happens."

Regarding IAAPA, Fedesna commented, "This is an upbeat show. There is interest in buying. I wish some of the energy from this show would translate to the traditional coin-op shows."

Fellow manufacturer Pete Gustafson of Sega GameWorks said, "This is a refreshing change from some of our other shows where people are less enthusiastic."

"THERE IS SO MUCH VARIETY THAT YOU DON'T SEE ANYWHERE ELSE. YOU SEE TOTAL ENTERTAINMENT HERE, NOT JUST GAMES."

Dave Courington of Valley Recreation Products had his own take on the current industry situation and the shows: "The buying public goes about it backwards—attending more trade events in good times. They should be at shows when times are tough, looking for ideas and ways to improve what they currently have. Operators have all the tools; sometimes you need a different key to start the engine."

On that note, let's take a look at some of the new products on the coin-op side that might get locations percolating again.

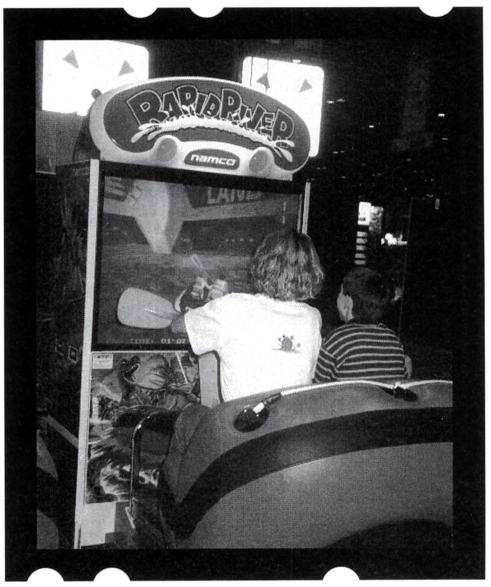
VIDEOS AND PINS

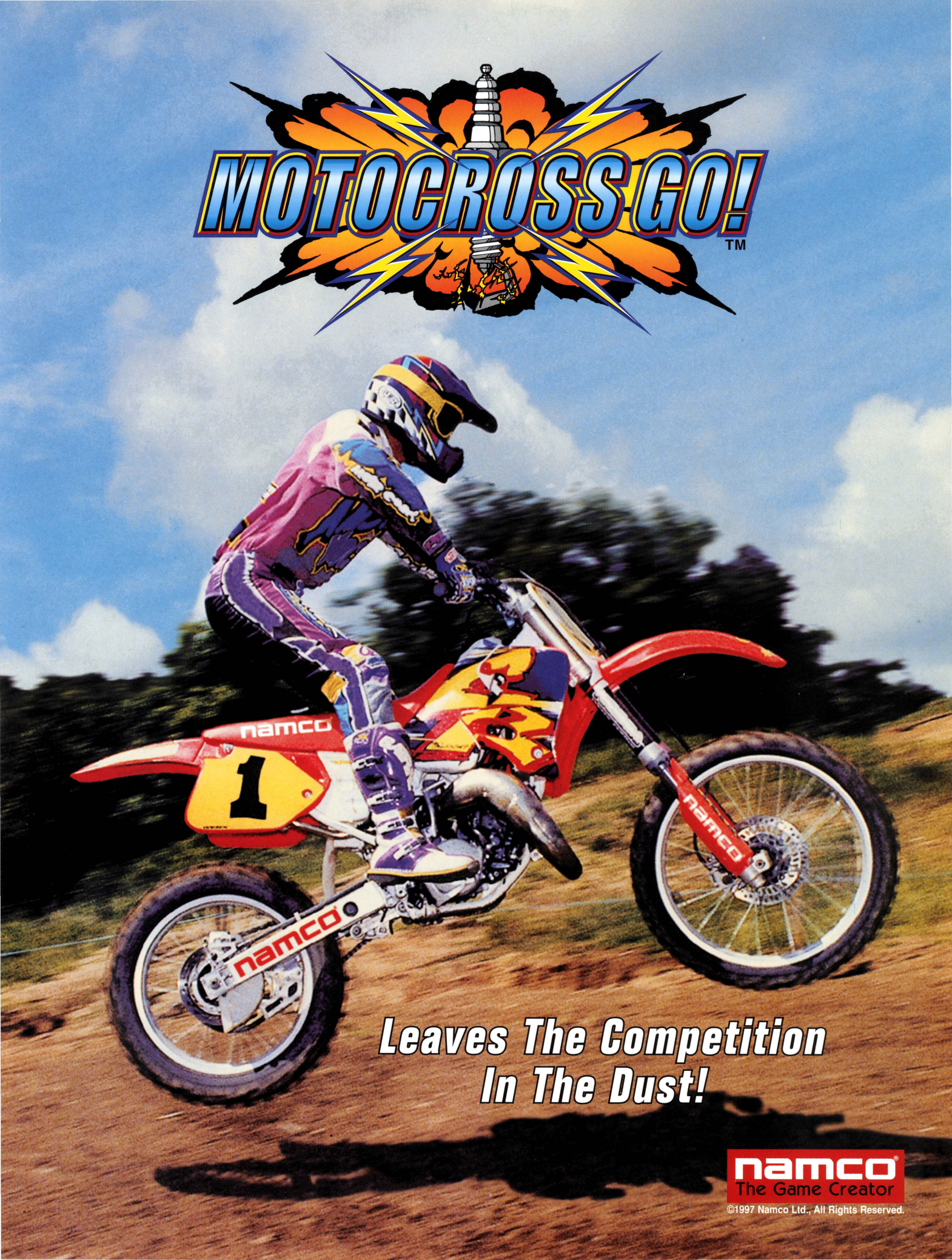
Namco exhibited the new *Rapid River* white water rafting video simulator where one or two players sit in a raft-like seat that moves. Using a double paddle, players maneuver through rough waters on different courses seen on the 50-inch monitor. Also new: the *Ehrgeiz* fighting kit (both ready in February).

In the "shown before" category were the *Motocross Go!* motocross racing video simulator linkable up to four units, available in either a standard

ABOVE: **Sega's *Power Sled* two-man bobsled adventure featured an 80-inch monitor.**

BELOW: **Namco debuted the *Rapid River* simulator for one or two players.**





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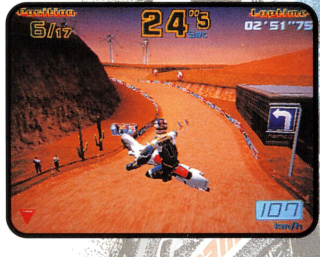
- Pneumatic bike frame feedback.

The popular theme and challenging game play make MOTOCROSS GO! a winner as a single player or linked game.



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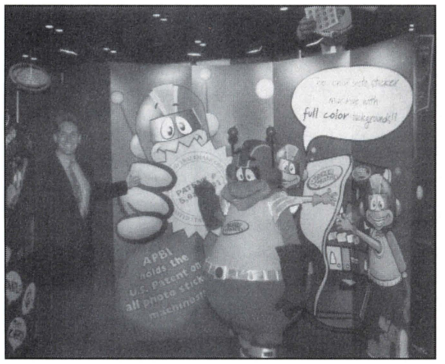
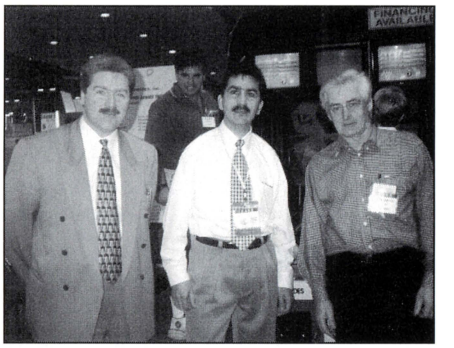
IAAPA '97



APBI's Richard Attenburg with the *Sticker Station* space character.

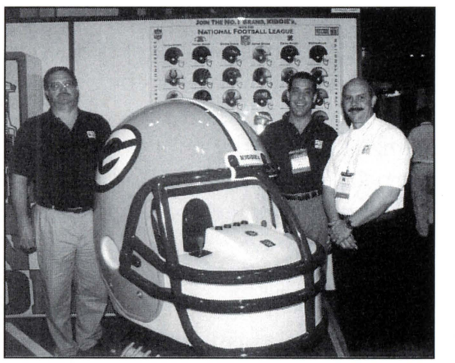
At the Merit booth, (l-r): Jim Roe, Jan Van De-Velde, Peter Feuer, and Lou Roudolph.



From left: Marc Paiement of NOVACAP, Izidro Souza of Fun Enterprises, and Lucien Rochefort of Mendes.

Ken McPhail of Actionmatic by Machine-O-Matic's Tri-Tower with canopies.

Allied Specialty Insurance's Charles Landrum (l) and David Smith.



Green Bay fans... ride the helmet! (Other teams, too!) From left: Kiddie's Mfg.'s John Druga, Doug Shipley, and Eric Torres.

From left: National Ticket's Ester Vidot, Bill Owen, and Maureen Mulhall.

Eastern Golf's Bodger Lambertini (l) and Craig Hohuth confer with Cost of Wisconsin's Jon Stanwyck.

Next to Data East's *Stamp Expression* machine are the company's Jeanne Petit and Hiro Seike.

By *Demolition Zone*, (l-r): Six Flags' Mark Brown; Skee-Ball's Mark Kane, Tom Kane, and Theresa Quinn; and Six Flags' Dan Holland.

A smiling Deborah Demarest at the Green Duck token booth.

Next to the *Viper* interactive simulator are Astro Distributing's John Nelson (c) with Spectrum's Bob and Linda Robbins.

model with 27-inch monitor or a deluxe model with 50-inch monitor; the *Final Furlong* horse racing simulator; and the video kit *Libero Grande* that provides soccer competition with System 12 technology and international team action in two 3D stadiums.

Konami featured *Steering Champ,* a two-player video with 17 different games inside (fighting, shooting, bowling, racing, and more) that uses steering wheel controls and pedals; the *Winning Spike World Cup* volleyball-themed kit; the *Nagano Winter Olympics '98* with 13 rounds of competition in winter sports; the *Smash & Spin* sports simulator with a ping pong game that can be sest for novice to expert player, shown on a 50-inch monitor; and the *Racing Jam* video simulator with three types of courses and the opportunity to customize car settings.

Also shown by Konami: *Fighting Bujutsu,* a fighting-themed video with the Cobra system (ready this month), and the *Rushing Heroes* video kit and *Solar Assault* video simulator (available now) seen at AMOA '97.

Digital Vehicles presented the *Pacesetter* racing simulators in standard model or deluxe top-of-the-line model for upscale locations. Pacesetter utilizes a 180-degree wraparound system and the Quantum 3D graphics accelerator.

SNK showcased its Hyper Neo Geo 64 system shown with the 3D fighting game *Samurai Shodown 64* and the RV driving game *Road's Edge,* both seen at AMOA Expo '97.

Sega GameWorks debuted a number of special attractions: *Power Sled,* a three-player motion-based bobsled simulator with 80-inch monitor (it requires an attendant); a PC-based Model 3 3D fishing-themed game (Model 1 was *Virtua Racing,* Model 2 was *Daytona USA*); and the *Jurassic Park Special Edition* two-player theater with 80-inch monitor, motion-based bench seat, and surround sound.

Also shown at the Sega booth: the *Motor Raid* bike race simulator; *The House of the Dead* video; *The Lost World: Jurassic Park* and *Water Ski* video simulators, all seen before.

Sega Pinball introduced the *Starship Troopers* pinball based on the sci-fi movie of the same name. The bug blasters can get rid of evil mutants via the tri-flipper action and take advantage of unique multiball sequences.

Atari again showed *San Francisco Rush: The Rock, Alcatraz Edition* that features four new tracks and cars and new shortcuts and music.

Midway Games offered a foursome shown previously at AMOA Expo '97: the 3D action of *NFL Blitz* with its trick plays, realistic tackles, and a speedy offense; the newest installment in the MK series, *Mortal Kombat 4* (revision 2 now as a kit), powered by the Zeus chip; *Off Road Challenge* with its six rugged courses and Speed Shop feature; and the Bally pinball, *Cirqus Voltaire.*

ICE also returned with videos debuted earlier: the one- or two-player economical kit *EggVenture* that has 28 different screen levels, shown in ICE's 34-inch universal cabinet; the graphically impressive strategy/fighting video *Armageddon* (by Acclaim) shown in a 38-inch dedicated cabinet with high-resolution VGA monitor and 3dfx voodoo graphics card (available this month); and the *Kick-It* video with virtual 3D goalie (by Interactive Light).

In the countertop arena, Micro Mfg. again showed the multilingual, hard drive platform *Global Touch HD* with 50 different full motion games and operator-friendly features such as regular or tournament play.

COCKTAIL TABLES

They're back! Following the theme of "everything old is new again" those once popular tabletop games may be making a comeback if Creative Electronics and Software and Incredible Technologies find a niche with '90s versions available with a pedestal for stand-up competition or without for sit-down fun in locations that may not have embraced traditional upright videos.

According to Scott Morrison of Incredible Technologies, the return of the cocktail table format is just in time

From left: Jim Ross, Joe Bundra, and Adam Maloney with the CES Galaxy System multicartridge cocktail table.

Bob's Space Racers introduced the *Top Glo* midway game and Player-Ready Building.

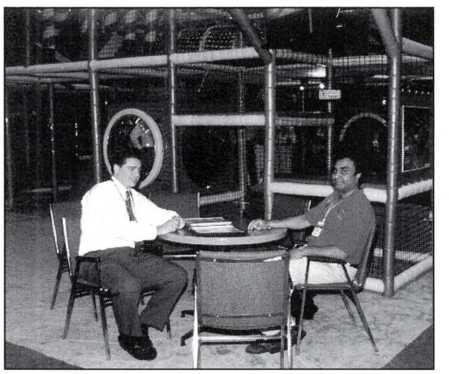
IAAPA '97

From left: Kiddie Ride USA's Joe DeMarsico, Brian Carasik, and Mike Evans show Amazing Amusement's David Zaitschek their *Speed Racer* kiddie ride.

At the Little Tikes' booth, (l-r): Jeff Kagan, Julia Woodward, and Mark Adams.

Impulse Amusements' Lydia Plescia with the company's *Love Meter* and *Psychic Advisor.*

Master Pitching Machine's Joe (r) and Jim Giovagnoli play host to Amusement Business' Julie Crider.



Prime Play's Jason Wharrie (l) consulting with Flying Frog's Jay Patel.

Visiting the Play Meter booth, (l-r): Thomas Klausing, Victoria Strickland, and Norman and Shirleen Greber of Little Squirt Sports Park.

Bob Mills (l) of Arachnid shows the inner workings of the *Galaxy* dart game to Duke White of Southern Sound Music Co.

At the AAMA booth, (l-r): Bob Fay, Frank Ballouz, Angela Orlando, and Conrad Ho.

From left: Beckman Insurance's Michael Beckman, Kimberly Kruger, and Peter Allen.

Next to United Machine's *Treasure Chest* are Dan Dinnebeil (l) and Sid Karmia.

By Incredible Technologies' *Shuffleshot,* (l-r): Scott Morrison, Marguerite Kirby, and Mike Hanson.

At the Birmingham Vending booth, (l-r): Kris Werner of Kris Werner Co. and Birmingham's Larry Sinclair, Fred Cyrway, Richard Gersman, and Gary Gouse.

to accommodate the changing marketplace. Said Morrison, "Demand has been great for our golf game *(Golden Tee 3D Golf)* in restaurants where they want a lower profile game. We intend to make all of our games compatible with our cocktail table." Construction is plywood and MDF material with a metal control panel, double coin mechs and bill acceptor, and priced about the same as the company's upright games.

Plans are to have all IT games available as kit, dedicated upright, countertop, and cocktail. Morrison said the first run of the new *Shuffleshot* game (dedicated or kit) has been shipped, and the Tournament Version of *Golden Tee '98* would be ready in March.

The CES Galaxy System is the first multicartridge system cocktail table that features seven games in the base unit. Joe Bundra of CES says new software will come out every three months. The system can hold 47 games; the cabinet is 100 percent plywood with a one-year warranty. CES also showed its wall games for street locations: *Trap Shoot Classic, Country Club Classic,* and *Home Run Classic.*

"I WISH SOME OF THE ENERGY FROM THIS SHOW WOULD TRANSLATE TO THE TRADITIONAL COIN-OP SHOWS."

ALONG THE MIDWAY

Bob's Space Racers introduced the *Top Glo* multiplayer game housed in the new Player-Ready Building that looks like a permanent installation but can be easily moved. The building has roll-up aluminum doors and can accommodate any BSR midway-style game. *Top Glo* can be ordered in any size from two-player units up to eight or 10-player units. A number of favorite BSR games were on display, as well the new *Red Planet* game based on the Total Eclipse.

Skee-Ball showed the multiplayer *Operation Vortex* game (in six- to 16-player versions) where players shoot balls at a flashing target inside their Vortex Death Star.

Namco showed the new *Flick Derby,* a one-to six-player midway-style game developed by Mexel, available this month. Game features include a progressive jackpot, ticket saver system, multicoin capability, and many operator-adjustable elements. Namco also offered the *Pinpoint Shot* four-player target shooting game (no release date set yet).

Outstanding Amusements introduced *Bomb's Away* and *The Men's Room,* multiplayer games that made attendees laugh at the bathroom humor behind the games. In *Bomb's Away* players take up a spot at one of the eight face basins, push it forward, and retrieve colorful balls to throw at open commodes at the back of the game. In *The Men's Room* they use a sprayer at the face basins to squirt water into open commodes while figures of men (and one woman) move back and forth in front of the targets.

Game designer Randy Senna wants to put fun back into games. He commented that games used to make sounds like "ding" and "dong" where now the sounds are "ooch" and "ouch" because of the multitude of fighting-themed games. Senna believes the fun element is paramount, and added: "I prefer to let the games play a little longer. Let them (customers) leave happy."

SPORTS GAMES

ICE showed its steel and plywood linkable *Hoop Fever* with the new basketball marquee; also the *Putting Challenge II* seen at AMOA '97.

Coastal Amusements introduced *Double Jam,* a child-size version of its *Triple Jam* basketball game. *Double Jam* features two baskets (the lower one moves), colorful graphics, and a light and sound package.

Arm Champs II from Jaleco was also on display, as well as the soccer-themed *Penalty Shoot Out* from Coastal, the *Smash & Spin* sports simulator from Konami, and the redesigned *Rage in the Cage* basketball game from Skee-Ball.

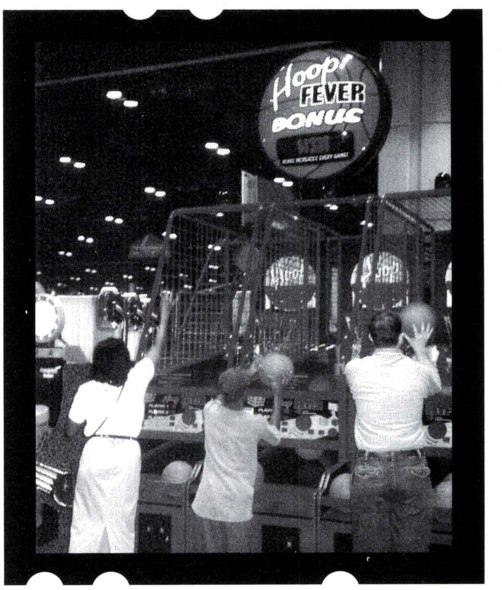
Champion Mfg. showed the dome-covered *Champion Shot* basketball game for one or two players. Players charge up and shoot the ball into the basket for a high score.

MUSIC

Rowe showcased its new red *Laser-Star StarLight* and new wall model *The*

ABOVE: **A dad and son play Konami's *Steering Champ* that features 17 different games.**

BELOW: **ICE exhibited its *Hoop Fever* with the new basketball marquee.**



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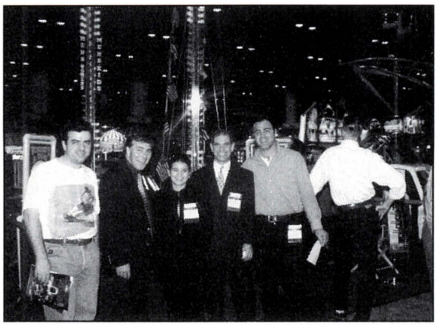
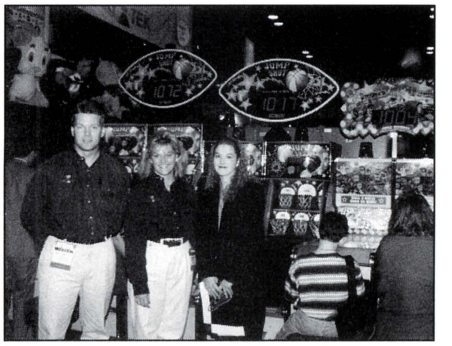
HMS Monaco's Steve Schulman (r) meets with Colombia's Fernando Moncada (l) and Guillermo Vargas Badill of IATEK Co.

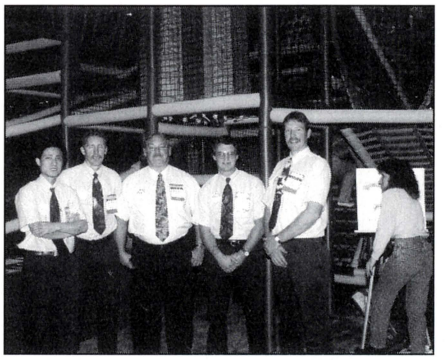


In front of *Hi-Striker*, Coastal Amusements' Sal Mirando (second from right), Conchi Colomera-Dorante (c) and Harry Levy (second from left) with customers from Italy.

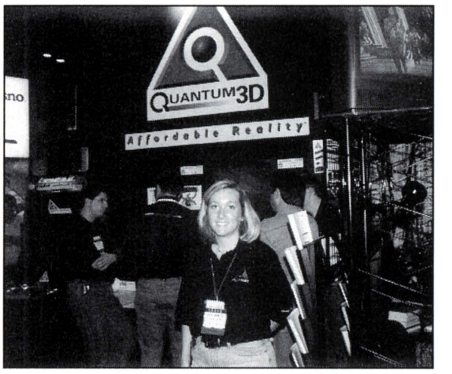


From left: Bay-Tek's Brad Danielson, Lisa Basten, and Danielle DeKeyser by the new *Jump Shot*.

S & B Candy & Toy Co.'s Brian Riggles with his Beany Baby mix in *The Beanie Zone* crane.



The Play Smart crew, (l-r): Zhigang Wu, Hal Johnson, Howard Weaver, Darrell Weaver, and Steve Root.



Quantum 3-D's Sara Sprinkles smiles for the camera.

At Sureshot Redemption, (l-r): Malibu Entertainment's Sue Monday and Janet Drake with Sureshot's Rorie Keller, Dennis Foland, and Mike Lynch.

AGE's J.R. Fishman (r) with Pals Vending's Jim Mundy looking at the lobsters in *The Lobster Zone*.

Asahi Seiko's Mark Cross and Pam Hugill (l) with Martha Therner and Earl Vaughn of Uncommon Entertainment.

Part of the Happ Controls group pose for a quick picture.

Bruce (l) and Brian Ray of Ray Products visit with Entropy USA's Jeff Blair.

Checking out *Motor Raid*, (l-r): Brady Distributing's Jon W. Brady with Sega GameWorks' Barbara Joyiens, John Hill, and Pete Gustafson.

Storm, while NSM had its *Sapphire* and *Digital Wall Thunder* and Wurlitzer exhibited its new *Princess* wall unit (all seen at AMOA '97).

The Sweet Melodies Studio, an automated karaoke recording studio by the company of the same name, allowed customers to select a song from over 600 tunes posted on the outside of the machine, enter the studio for a short rehearsal, and record their voice as the lead vocal of the song. A cassette is dispensed at the finish.

Konami showed *Hip Hop Mania*, where players become a DJ using two turntables and piano keys, timing keystrokes to match the rhythm line. Feedback of "hooray" or "boo" comes back to the player and he moves on to the next song. Music styles include techno, hip-hop, and reggae.

TABLE GAMES

Dynamo's updated *Hot Flash* air hockey game, with all-new graphics and overhead scoring, was shown for the first time. It literally glows in the dark. Look for shipping dates early this month.

Valley featured its *Blacklight* Upgrade Kit that converts most Valley pool tables with new Cougar emblem table corners, pocket liners, trim moldings, diamond markers, electric blue rail cloth, black play-surface cloth, and set of balls.

JUST FOR KIDS

On Harley-Davidson's 95th anniversary, Kiddies Mfg. debuted the *Harley-Davidson* kiddie ride available for the coin-op trade this month. It's a replica of the Heritage Springer model, perfect for Harley-Davidson themed restaurants and stores, as well as other locations.

"OPERATORS HAVE ALL THE TOOLS; SOMETIMES YOU NEED A DIFFERENT KEY TO START THE ENGINE."

Also new from Kiddies is the *NFL Helmet* interactive two-seater ride (featuring all 30 NFL teams). Said Doug Shipley of Kiddies: "We want to bring incremental business to the industry. No one's been able to get into the sports stores and it's a good location for a kiddie ride." The licensed *Spiderman* ride and *Incredible Hulk* ride were on display as well.

Entropy, known for its ticket dispensers, coin doors, speakers, and power supplies, showed its *Dino System* coin-op battery cars to the delight of youngsters. Choose from six characters; each car has a maximum load of 400 lbs., turning radius of 55 inches, four-wheel design for stable ride and safety, foot pedal control, flashing lights, and adjustable riding time.

Lazer-Tron brought out its *Hoppin' Harry* ticket redemption video in a child-size cabinet. Harry is quickly recognized as a popular character from the company's *Ribbit Racin'* game. Harry hops from lilly pad to lilly pad in the video.

Champion Mfg.'s *Lil'Champ* offers CD-based interactive games for youngsters from age two up. Children get to choose from Sesame St., Flintstones, Beauty and the Beast, and more, all housed in a cabinet just their size.

The Kiddie Ride Exchange exhibited the steel-frame *TeleFun Box*, a red phone booth where children can hear nursery rhymes and play "find the rhyme" by matching buttons. Features include flashing lights, attract mode with adjustable volume, full metering, and adaptable coin mech.

The Kiddie Photo Booth was introduced over at the Alter Enterprises display, where the company is the U.S. agent for Amutec Kiddie Rides. The booth is scaled for little kids and operates at a suggested $2 vend. While the photo is processing for 30 seconds, kids can move buttons and make sounds in the booth. Also shown: photo units that can go with any kiddie ride. Two models are available: one takes a photo when the parent or guardian chooses the pose, and anoth-

Outstanding Amusements took the humorous route with *The Men's Room*.

By the Wurlitzer *Princess* wall model, (l-r): Dave Peckels, Mike Riquier, and Ernie Veneziano.

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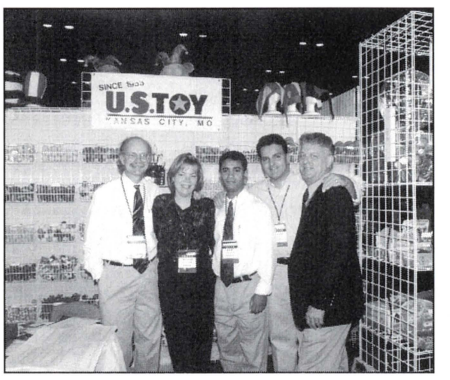
Rowe's Rex Yannarell (l) and Joel Friedman are proud of new jukebox models—*The Storm* wall box and red *LaserStar StarLight.*

At the AAMA booth, (l-r): Micro Mfg.'s Lamar Forque and Larry Hartley, Arachnid's Bob Mills, and Valley Vending's Robert Prescott and Jeffery Prescott.

By the new *Twister*, (l-r): Lazer-Tron's Norm Petermeier, Whimsy's Isabel Javier, Lazer-Tron's Ron Carrara, and Whimsy's Ken Wagner and Enchmen Lai.

Atari Games' Tom Keil and Mary Fujihara smile by the very popular *San Franciso Rush, the Rock.*

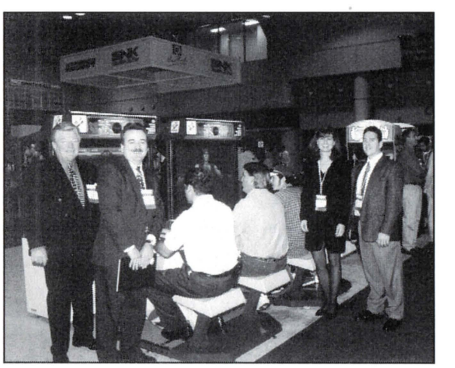


From left: U.S. Toy's Joe Zumsten, Linda Ohlsen, Jim Smith, G.G. Tortorici, and Luis Nunez.

Goal Industries' Heather Baldwin and A.J. Kress show off their first place IAAPA award for revenue and admission control.

Flanking a young showgoer testing the Altus/Sega *Print Club* sticker machine are Laura O'Connell and Mr. Kyosuki Aoki.

Premier Data's Al Geitl (c) plays host to Bill Foster (l) of Carefree Systems and Applied Resource's Rick Kerbel.



From left: Konami's Mike Rudowicz, Jim Belt, Mary Hermanson, and Patrick Riley watch a competitive duo play *Fighting Bujutsu.*

Play-By-Play/Laramie Interests' Looney Tunes basketball collection is the backdrop for, (l-r): Doug Goldberg, Stephen Chernin, and Sid Karmia.

Getting the jolts from *Shocker* are Bromley's Lauran Bromley (c) and Ellen Fuog (l) with Ragtime's Pat Leslie.

By *Motocross Go!*, (l-r): Take Ten's Jane Adkins with Namco's Frank Cosentino, Mr. Nakamura, and David Swafford.

er takes four photos while the ride is in progress.

Among other kiddie ride offerings: Mitchell's Kiddie Rides featured *The Chocolate Truck*; Coastal Amusements showed the Whittaker Bros. *Choo Choo Train*; Falgas had its *Taxi Baby*; Kiddie Rides USA's display included *Speed Racer, Mr. Potato Head,* and interactive *Corvette* and *Cadillac* rides; EMT highlighted the *Muppet Babies* rides; and Zamperla showed its colorful *Burro* set on a stand complete with a cactus wearing a sombrero.

The Kiddie Ride Co. exhibited the redesigned *Stealth* flight simulator kiddie ride (previously from Simulators International). The series of deluxe rides includes the *Starfighter, Skyhawk Raider, Stealth,* and *Turbochopper.*

In addition, the Kiddie Ride Co. represented Bafco Kiddie Rides and showed new Bafco rides that included *The Jungle Book* carousel with elephant and lion for two riders, the *Lucky Dog* ride with a dalmation that sits next to the child, and the *Lion Cub* ride.

REDEMPTION AND MORE

Benchmark introduced *Claim Jumper,* a skill redemption game available in three- or four-player versions that appeal equally to children and adults. The goal is to get your tokens into the moving train cars and create bonus jackpots. Cars ride on a strong hardened aluminum turntable.

More ingenuity was shown at Entropy USA in the *Road Hawg* game. Players push a button to choose a car, which is highlighted, then release a ball that comes down a zig-zag ramp. The object is to match the car with its driver on the playfield below. When there's a match you get a bonus without a match you still get tickets.

HanaHo Games debuted the *Skillshot* novelty game available in a bar version and redemption version. The object is to shoot your coin across six rails and by using three flippers on each side keep it in play until it reaches the bottom. The bar version has a black light feature; the redemption version has a ticket dispensing feature.

The game is similar to the *Skill Roll* game from the '50s.

Also brand-new from Lazer-Tron was the *Roll-A-Rainbow* roll down with seven colorful target slots. The object is to complete the colors of the rainbow to win tickets. Get all seven and get the bonus to boot!

Bay Tek debuted the *Toss-Up* ball toss game with neon lights, zippy sound, and colorful blue-green and hot pink cabinet, and *Jump Shot,* a basketball-themed game that is a cross between an alley bowler and a roll down in a purple and yellow cabinet. Both games bank well.

Bay Tek also showed an updated Fortune Teller machine that dispenses fortune cards, and the hexagonal six-player *Circus* coin pusher from KW Machines in the United Kingdom.

ICE devoted ample space to the Cromptons line of coin pushers, including the economical eight-player *Splash Down* with coin or ticket payout; the one- to six-player *Pirates Treasure* with a random bonus, housed in a molded fiberglass cabinet; and the *Soccer Shot* that combines elements of pushers and coin drop games. *Soccer Shot* challenges players to shoot tokens into three goals guarded by an interactive goalie (seats and base are included).

Seidel continued to draw attention with its two-player *Star Catcher* novelty game which has been sped up to accommodate faster score registration and spiced up on the graphics side. Players can load from one to nine tokens, play two in a row to win double tickets, or play three to win triple. (The game will be ready to ship this month).

Impulse Amusements displayed a selection of its games that can be countertops or stand on a pedestal: *Dr. Love Love Meter, Psychic Advisor, True Grip Challenge,* and *Gina the Gypsy.* Also at Impulse: the *Treasure Castle* egg dispensing unit, four-column sticker machine, and the *Impulse Scale.*

Skee-Ball exhibited its line of alley bowlers as well as the *Demolition Zone* whacking game that awards tickets for success.

Elton Fabrication brought *Flip Time,* a pinball-like game that awards tickets, plays a jingle, and has operator-adjustable ticket payout and time settings and jackpot scores for top players.

And Island Design debuted *Vortex,* a two-player funnel game with adjustable ticket payouts for hitting targets. The jade cabinet is made of plywood with a Formica overlay; a dome top and lighting complete the package.

The now-famous Sega Pinball cow redemption game *Udderly Tickets* was again on display, along with the company's *Austin Powers* coin roll game.

Bromley continued to shock with its

ABOVE: **A family stops to check out the new *Mini Key Catcher* from Sammy USA.**

BELOW: **The *Macro Puzzle Ball* unit was shown at the Falgas USA booth.**

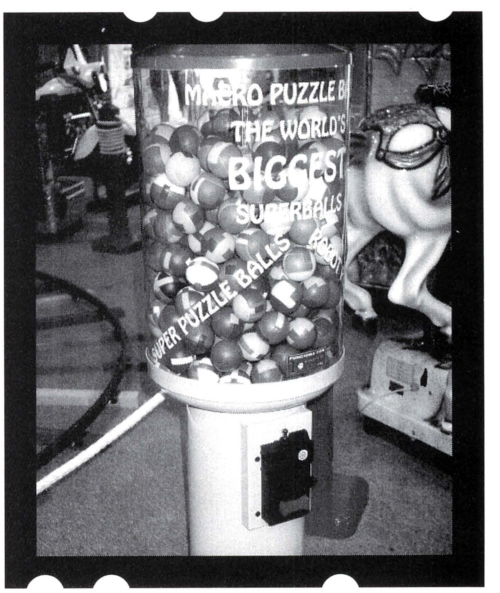


PHOTO STICKER MANIA

It's a craze in Japan, and trade show exhibitors throughout fall '97 displayed a wide assortment of photo sticker machines. It remains to be seen if the units will reach the same level of popularity in the continental United States as seen overseas. Suggested vend prices are $3-$5.

The choice includes:

America Ado, *PicStix*—Get 16 cute stamps from this countertop machine in 48 seconds. Customers can actually doodle on the pictures with the touch screen function. (408-733-9920)

APBI, *Sticker Station*—This American-made machine imprints the player's face on a variety of backgrounds from a sea of balloons to spaceships, and delivers 16 miniprints. (703-519-5656)

According to Rob Loomis of APBI, customized units are available and the company is working with retailers. He explained the attraction of this type of machine: "Retailers are looking for more ways to appeal to customers and keep customers in their locations longer. That's why we are finding acceptance in stores. Our product reaches more of the target audience—mom, kids, and teen girls."

Atlus/Sega, *Print Club*—Processing takes just 30 minutes in this fully automatic unit with 20-inch monitor and choice of 27 different backgrounds—seasonal, celebrity, and more. Get 16 photos on one 3-1/2" x 5" film. (Atlus—714-753-7883; Sega—650-802-3100)

Buy Rite accessory products for the placement of stickers will be available this month. These Photo Sticker Keepers include notepads and key chains. A side-mounted vending unit is available for inexpensive items next to the machine; larger items can be placed in redemption counters. (732-294-9391)

Data East, *Stamp Expressions*—Create a personalized self-inking photo stamp choosing from a variety of backgrounds and colors (60 total) that are easily updated. The machine takes four separate pictures five seconds apart to allow for changes of pose. Then the player selects the favorite pose and gets the stamp in a plastic case. (408-734-5770)

Great American Sales, *Sticker Fun*—Delivers 16 peel-off stickers in a choice of 36 backgrounds. Built-in modem technology allows owner/operators to access machine performance via the World Wide Web. (800-754-7098)

Jaleco, *Stamp Magic*—Get your photo on a stamp with the border and color of your choice. A zoom feature allows players to custom fit the image. You can even compose your own design. The finished stamp comes in a plastic case. (847-215-1811)

KIS/Groupe Photo Me, *Sticker Player*—Choose from 30 fun backgrounds and in 35 seconds have 16 miniphotos. The compact machine is user-friendly, requires little space and maintenance, and has a capacity of 200 strips. (France, +33-47633-3000)

Kodak, *Sticker Prints*—Each 4" x 5" sheet contains 16 color prints. In addition to photos taken by the high- resolution digital camera, players can add movie stars or animated characters for a high souvenir value. (888-265-6981)

Konami, *Puri Puri Canvas*—This one lets you draw on the pictures with a touch pen and produces two large stickers and eight small stickers using various screens including mystery frames. Also from Konami, *Puri Mucho*—This unit takes your picture twice and produces a 3D key chain. (847-215-5100)

Moon Rabbit, *Quicker Sticker*—Obtain 16 stickers in 25 seconds via a high quality digital camera and speedy printer. It stores over 1,000 custom frames that are easy to change out. Possibilities are endless said machine designer Mayuki Yanagawa. (888-784-2516)

SNK, *Neo Print*—Get a total of 16 stickers in four different backgrounds in 25 seconds—all on one sheet of film. Choose color, black and white, or sepia prints in 12 basic frame styles. Total backgrounds: 48. The machine is cartridge-based; a preview function assures the best results. (408-292-4550)

Sammy USA—Three models: *Plate Memory* that takes your picture and puts it on a key chain; *Tattoo Club* that creates a personalized temporary tattoo; and *My Puzzle* that delivers your photo on a 28-piece jigsaw puzzle you can take apart and put back together. (888-US-SAMMY)

XStasis, P*hoto Pod*—Places customers into customized digital stories (Visit to a Fortune Teller, UFO Abduction, Hollywood Casting Call) and creates a Web page for the user and instantly sends it onto the Internet. The Web page address is printed on the four stickers. (305-461-3336)

In the more traditional photo booth category are **Fantasy Entertainment's** (800-933-2682) *Foto Festival* and *Foto Fantasy* models and **Video Magic's** (616-977-0227) multifunction *People Postcards* that can produce postcards and full color magazine covers with the customer's face.

Photo Vend International (941-432-0342) displayed the *Make Your Own Photo* machine that vends a postcard with your photo on a choice of backgrounds, and the *Instant Exposure Booth* by **Instant Exposure** (561-434-0984) that vends four photos on one sheet of film. The all-steel unit can be indoors or outdoors.

PhotoWave exhibited its interactive digital imaging system that allows creation of customized photos with any background, banner, or picture at free-standing networked interactive terminals. (412-928-2200) ▲

Shocker electric chair, as well as showcase its time-proven coin drop games and the *Thunder Run* car race novelty game.

Astro Distributing presented the new *Match 3* redemption game that asks players to match cool cats to win; also the *Rotary Star* prize catcher and the self-contained *Bowlerama* that vends tickets, a prize capsule, or a superball.

In addition, Meltec brought *Big Mouth 2000* and *Knock Down 2000*; Coastal displayed the two-player *Hoop-La* by Harry Levy that asks players to place hoops over containers filled with prizes; and Zytronics showed its upright novelties *Gypsy Palm Reader, Electronic Horoscope,* and *Sex Analyst.*

CRANES

Fun Merchants debuted four new cranes: the *Eye-Catcher* three-player lowboy unit with revolving eye on the top; the *Mega Crane* line of one-player and two types of two-player models that handle plush or jewelry; the *Cosmic Crane,* also known as the "bowling ball" crane because it is made for heavy plush and has three coils in the plunger; and the *Quatro,* a four-player centerpiece crane that can be operated with a divider for four different types of merchandise or with one huge prize bay.

Neal Rosenberg of Fun Merchants advised that the company is the Central and South America distributor for the *Kick-It* soccer simulator by Interactive light. Fun Merchants will keep the *Big Choice* crane line, but the *Limited Edition* line will be replaced by the *Mega Crane* line.

ICE followed its *Plush Bus* all-metal crane shown at AMOA '97 with the *Sports Bus* sports-themed crane that distills all the best crane features and puts them into one unit. Both *Plush Bus* and *Sports Bus* can be set for jumbo or regular size items. Suggested stock for the *Sports Bus*: any sports memorabilia such as balls, plaques, sports cards, and mugs.

Sammy USA showed the *Sports Arena* self-contained prize vending system for the first time. It accommodates a variety of sports-themed merchandise (160 prizes) and is housed in a tall silver cabinet. Also shown, the *Key Catcher Mini* crane that has the same attraction as the bigger model with a smaller footprint.

Smart Industries again showed the *Prize Circus* merchandising machine that holds about 60 items, depending on size (available this month). Also from Smart: the *Clean Sweep* crane line and *Bean Bag Buddies* crane.

Advanced Games & Engineering showed *The Lobster Zone, The Beanie Zone,* and *The Toy Zone* cranes; United displayed *The Treasure Chest* and *South Beach* cranes.

BULK VENDING

Children stopped for balloons at the Starr International booth where the company's *Balloon Party* vending machine dispensed four kinds of balloons in four colors (filled with non-flammable Helium gas).

They also enjoyed the new *Fun-E-Ball* from Fun Industries. The machine is a combination game and prize vendor that can give out capsules, gumballs, or small toys such as puzzle balls. Ticket and non-ticket versions are available. *Fun-E-Ball* has the same neon and black colors that stand out on the company's *Steer Crazy.*

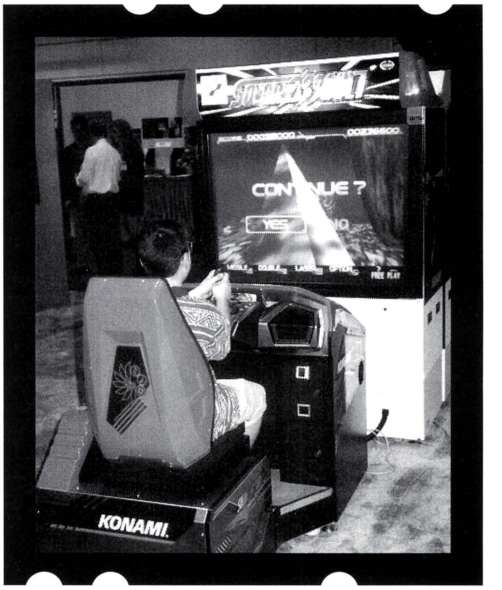
Global Gumball brought its *Neon Wizard* top-of-the-line spiral gumball machine, along with the *Candy Wizard, Mega Wizard,* and 27-inch *Lil' Wizard* that can be a countertop unit, mounted into a rack, or on a stand.

Benchmark debuted *Beat the Monsters,* a game and prize vending unit that dispenses gumballs or jawbreakers. If a player's gumball makes it past the animated monsters on the zig-zag playfield, they win.

The Candy Jar Co. offered a new twist on its *World's Biggest Candy Jar* with the new *Super Tube,* shown for the first time. The four-foot wide and seven-foot high machine features four clear tubes that can hold a variety of candies.

Machine-O-Matic augmented its popular *Tri-Tower* unit with canopies and flags atop each section and different colored bottom panels. The company also introduced a new pull-out cash box for the RB-16 and talking vendor units.

KDK Enterprises showed the front-loading Slimboy capsule toy vendor that only takes up 1.5 square feet of floor space; also the Gobbler unit that recycles the capsules.



A young player takes command in Konami's deep space 3D adventure, S*olar Assault.*

"IF YOU'VE LIMITED YOUR WORLD TO POOL TABLES, JUKEBOXES, AND DARTS—SO BE IT. BUT MAYBE IT'S TIME TO TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT."

OTHER ATTRACTIONS

Namco's *Pinpoint Shot* gave two to four players a chance to shoot targets quickly and accurately. A color lamp of the fastest player glowed above the target.

Coastal's American *Hi-Striker,* the biggest strength tester of all, drew a line of attendees ready to try their luck. *Hi-Striker* comes in 30-foot high park model, 24-foot high carnival model, and the 17.6-foot FEC model. ▲

IAAPA '97

HIGH-TECH

ATTRACTIONS STRIVE FOR PERSONAL TOUCH

TOP PHOTO: **Textron Motion Control exhibited the Minuette, a single-player interactive motion seat from the Fantasy Factory.**

BOTTOM PHOTO: **Dynamic Visions Orion GameSystem provides PC-based virtual reality.**

TECHNOLOGY IS OFTEN TOUTED FOR THE SO-CALLED "WOW" FACTOR THAT IT BRINGS TO THE TABLE IN OUT-OF-HOME ENTERTAINMENT. BUT CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS ARE ON THE RISE, AND A NEW CROP OF AMUSEMENT EQUIPMENT, DEBUTED AT IAAPA `97, IS DESIGNED TO MEET THAT NEED BY UTILIZING THE TOOLS OF INTERACTIVITY AND INTERCONNECTIVITY TO CREATE MORE PERSONALIZED EXPERIENCES FOR INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMERS.

This trend was apparent both on the show floor, where the products do the talking, and off, where industry insiders, pundits, and spectators discussed the growing use of technology to meet an ever restless audience's desire to be entertained in a way that combines the grandness of out-of-home environments such as classic theme parks with the tailor-made feel they have come to enjoy in today's sophisticated consumer electronics.

Examples of this notion abound from smart cards that track player information and may one day be used to store unfinished games and ported from location to location to the growing trend in interactive simulation rides—as opposed to the passive experiences popular in the past—and the use of Internet connections to join play experiences at home and on location.

Exploring this idea from its current incarnations to its logical extension in the future were five distinguished panelists who participated in the fourth annual IAAPA seminar "High tech in the FEC" moderated by Michael Getlan of Amusement Consultants in New Rochelle, N.Y. The panelists were industry analyst and writer Louis Brill, Ed Pearson of Seattle Funplex, Jason Robar of Microsoft, L.M. Rosenfeld of Iwerks Entertainment, and Don Wright of the Wright Development Group.

"The reason I went back to the arcade when I was young was to make sure my high score was still on the game," said Robar. "Now imagine that I can take my score and maybe my e-mail name and have it on every game."

Another way of magnifying the connection between the player and the location, ironically, is through the home, according to several panelists. Web sites can be used for everything from traditional promotion to providing sample game experiences and tournament competition that will entice the player back to the location for value-added game play on high-end hardware.

While FECs may be able to provide original (i.e. commissioned) game content in the future, which they can promote through limited editions over the Internet, Robar said one option currently available is providing off-the-shelf PC game play which can easily be customized to reflect an individual location's brand.

"In essence, the home becomes the pick up game," he explained. "You are not making the games. You are making the experience. These tools are already available."

"People eventually go home but there's no need to loose them as customers," added Brill. "I don't think people fully understand the potential of using Web sites in the operation of a center, but they will see the light. In time, this will filter

down from the corporate level to (independently owned) FECs. You will now have a way to tap into the home market that lets you expand what you offer to your customers."

So what does the future hold for FECs trading in high-tech entertainment? In the short term, most of the panelists predicted the limited application of technology and theming to increase the attractiveness of location by joining attractions to create a whole greater than the sum of its parts.

Rosenfeld suggested linking attractions such as laser tag or an arcade to high-end offerings such as simulation or large-format film to create a play experience that encompasses both experiences. Another idea is utilizing large-format film or motion theaters for standard feature films during off hours. "That's the way you are going to broaden your demographic and make back your money," she said. "We don't need to stamp out the same things over and over and we don't have to get into such high technology that you can never get out of debt."

Wright, a former FEC operator, agreed. He argued that off-the-shelf technology has evolved to the point that operators can custom build many applications or attraction add-ons on their own. "There really is such wonderful technology out there," he said. "We just need to use our imaginations."

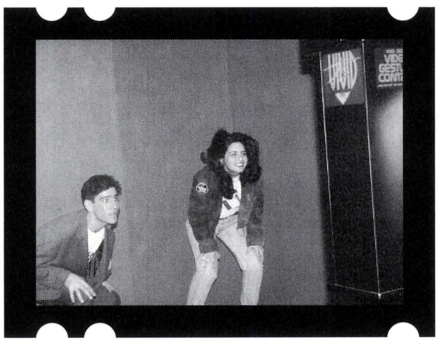
In the more distant future, most panelists envisioned spaces where players would be able to more directly determine the nature and direction of game content. "Virtual reality is still in its infancy; it's still untapped," said Pearson. "I see immersion centers where you are a part of the decision making process as the experience takes shape."

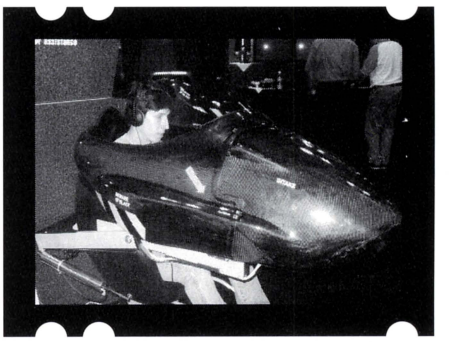
Moderator Getlan concurred with this assessment, predicting the rise of virtual environments or "caves" as opposed to the head-mounted-display-based attractions that have been available in recent years. "The minute it can be done at home, they will," said Getlan. "They may come to us for socialization, but we need to stay ahead of the cusp."

According to Robar, advances in PC technology will make a lot of these predictions possible and even widely available in an improvisational format that continually creates new narratives. "The ability of the computer is to ask what they want to see and generate it on the fly and there is not going to be that much difference between what the computer can do and what's on film," he concluded.

VIRTUAL REALITY

One of the biggest announcements for the video game world came from a relatively small manufacturer of HMD-based virtual reality equipment, Ferris Productions in Phoenix, Ariz., which has designed a system which will convert off-the-shelf PC software into an out-of-home experience that will communicate with traditional VR, LBE, or coin-op input devices.





TOP RIGHT: ViRtogo's Brad Engstrand (l) and L.J. Brody in front of the company's *FunPrint* unit.

MIDDLE LEFT: The Vivid Group introduced its one-player *JetSurfer-Sky Rally*, a real-time 3D gesture-controlled skyboard racing experience.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Cybermind Interactive Europe's VR Chair can operate as a stand-alone attraction or be networked. The unit is reportedly compatible with any PC, Nintendo, or Sony joystick-driven game.

BOTTOM: Thomson Entertainment's Venturer new S2i two-player, interactive simulator.

"It takes us about two days to convert any game without having to get software companies to change their code," said the company's founder Bob Ferris. "The customer doesn't see Windows or any of that. It's all going on in the background."

To make the system work, Ferris said a number of things will have to take place including a progressive mindset on the part of consumer firms that would view the arcade as a launching pad for future home titles and charge little or nothing for licensing their software. Operators will also have to rethink their pricing strategies, according to Ferris, lowering the entry price per play to lure customers into an experience that takes longer to unfold and thus generates more revenue in the long run. Ideally, software prices for operators would start around $700.

"If we can break through that barrier, we can make a wish list of games and nobody takes a risk but us," concluded Ferris, whose company is currently seeking a patent on the technology. Ferris Productions also exhibited its current line of VR products including the Experience System, VR Sensory Theater, and Universal VR System.

The void left earlier this year by the closing of VR giant Virtuality has been partially filled by German-based Cybermind Interactive Europe AG, which has acquired manufacturing and distribution rights to the company's 2000 SD and Total Recoil units. Matt Drakard of Cybermind UK, a division of the parent company, said the Virtuality platform is being retooled and will utilize a PC-based architecture and 3Dfx graphics card. "This will open up the pool of content from which to draw upon," Drakard said.

"We can actually play interactively from a cafe terminal to a VR sit-down unit; it's just a preview of where we are going," he explained. "We are trying to achieve a scaleable solution. You can play at home and then come to your local FEC."

In addition to the existing Virtuality units, Cybermind exhibited a prototype version of its personal motion base VR Chair which can operate as a stand-alone attraction or be networked. The unit is reportedly compatible with any PC, Nintendo, or Sony joystick-driven game.

The Ontario-based Vivid Group presented its new Holopod multiexperience unit that allows participants to select their choice of virtual environments and games to explore and encounter in an unencumbered environment. Players' images interact with one another or a virtual opponent on the projection screen; their movement is tracked and reproduced by the company's Video Gesture Control (VGC) System, the newest iteration of its patented Mandala System. Games include the hockey simulator Shut Out, Gravball, Virtual Volleyball, and VR Netminder Soccer.

HIGH TECH AT A GLANCE

VIRTUAL REALITY

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Cybermind Interactive Europe 49 3043033016; fax 49 3043033099
Dynamic Visions (905)673-6569; fax (905)673-1775
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MaxFlight Corp. (732)942-9898; fax (732)942-1114
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Stricor Inc. (770)447-1670; fax (770)447-4957
Thomson Entertainment 44 1293563533; fax 44 1293563388
Thrillseekers Australia 61 396045544; fax 61 396425559
ViRtogo Inc. (312)281-6435; fax (312)281-1567

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Full Swing Golf (619)675-1100; fax (619)675-1191
Interactive Light (310)581-8411; fax (310)452-7443
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Mir Corp. (770)925-1018; fax (770)925-8919
Sports Simulation Inc. (800)464-4883; fax (914)773-0550

LASER TAG

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Ascension Productions (403)496-9058; fax (403)496-9059
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Laser Chaser (909)946-2953; fax (909)985-8983
Laser Duel (770)461-9941; fax (770)460-5702
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LaserTron (716)836-0670; fax (716)836-0535
Stunner Corp. (209)538-3417; fax (209)538-3460
Ultrazone (702)734-3617; fax (702)734-3618
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Vivid also introduced the one-player JetSurfer-Sky Rally, a real-time 3D gesture-controlled skyboard racing experience in which players feel the sensations of skyboarding through futuristic cities. Reflexes are put to the test as racers navigate the course and speed to victory, twisting and turning to collect the floating time bonuses and speed-ups while avoiding obstacles. The unit also utilizes the company's VGC System and features Vivid's smallest unencumbered VR footprint to date.

Another Ontario-based virtual reality firm, the CM300 Corp., was on the show floor exhibiting what it called the first real-time video VR game, Virtual Speedway 300. The unit features six remote control race cars on a race track. They are controlled by players equipped with steering wheel and foot pedal inputs and an HMD, which transfers images from a TV camera mounted inside their respective cars. The company also exhibited its Cobra HMD pod unit, which can be configured as a stand-up or sit-down unit.

Dynamic Visions, also in Ontario, displayed the newest version of its HMD-based Orion GameSystem, which also employs a gun interface. The company's Qadeer Ahmed said they are prepared to be creative in financing the product so that it will cost operators no more than a deluxe video game. Currently, Dynamic Visions has agreements with consumer software firms Interplay, 3DO, and Apogy to provide game content.

"We modify the game to make it work in an out-of-home environment," Ahmed explained. "A lot of the fat in the VR industry is gone. We have done what all those other initiatives have said they were going to do in providing a single game system. When you upgrade the software, you can also upgrade the hardware."

Other companies showing traditional VR applications including HMD and unencumbered systems included: CCG Metamedia, creator of the patented REALWare VR system, and Virtual Systems, which has priced its stand-up pod-style unit at just under $15,000.

TRENDS IN SIMULATION

IAAPA `97 marked the full scale development of a trend in smaller motion simulators, aimed at regional locations, that feature direct interaction on the part of riders. "It has become more of a personal adventure; you are not just watching," explained Brill.

Notable companies showing such products included Astro Distributing, the newly-formed Camber Entertainment, Illusion Inc., Mariah Vision Entertainment, MaxFlight Corp., Motionbase plc, Signifi Group, Stricor Inc., Thomson Entertainment, Thrillseekers Australia, and ViRtogo Inc. In addition, Sega GameWorks exhibited its deluxe Power Sled attraction, a multiplayer interactive bob sled simulator.

U.K.-based Thomson's newest introduction, the Venturer S2i, was presented as an evolutionary development of

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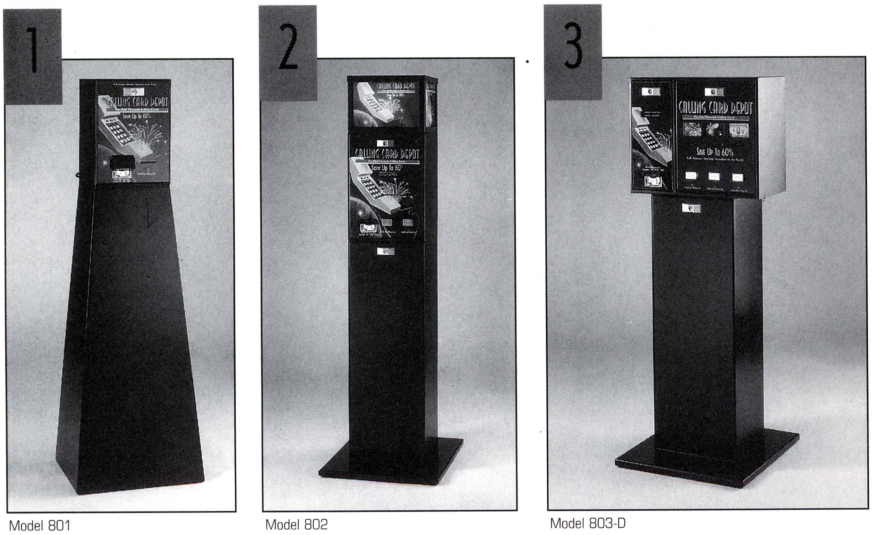

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its successful passive two-seater Venturer S2. Passive and interactive versions of the motion pod are now available with an electric or hydraulic motion base. Pricing on the unit ranges from $65,000 to $68,000 depending upon features. The interactive simulator runs on a Windows 95 operating system while the passive ride continues to utilize laser disc-driven software. Existing passive units can be upgraded to accommodate interactive software.

Principal features of the Venturer S2i include joystick controls for one or two players. A steering wheel option is available on the electric unit, which also utilizes a new semi-open capsule design. In two-player mode, one player acts as the pilot while the other serves as the navigator or shooter. In one-player mode, all the features of the game are concentrated into one set of controls. A range of competence levels is built into each game so novice and seasned players alike can enjoy the full experience.

Thomson's Graham Whitehead said that an extensive library of games will follow the introductory title, Millennium Odyssey by The Electric Film Factory in the U.K., including Grey-Stone Technology's upcoming coin-op title XS-G. "We are talking to two or three PC game manufacturers and expect to have some announcements soon," he said. "We are looking at six titles by mid-year."

In addition to the new interactive simulator, Thomson used a 20-seat motion theater in its booth to debut the newest computer generated passive simulator experience, Thunder Drive, also from The Electric Film Factory.

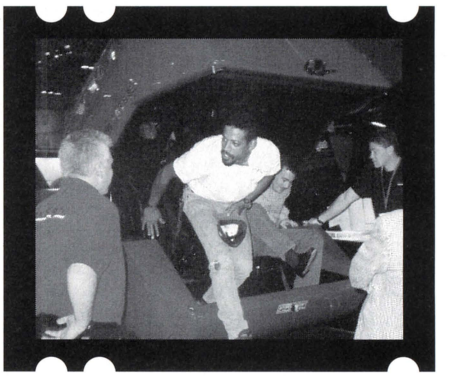
U.K.-based Camber Entertainment and Thrillseekers Australia displayed similar two-seat interactive motion capsule products on the show floor.

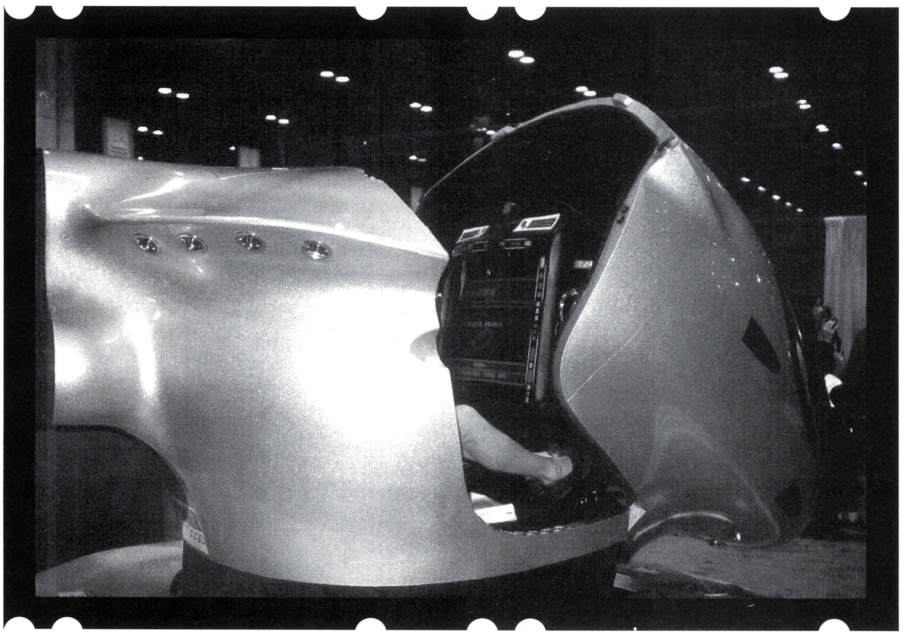
Camber's FX-2 features an electric motion system, three degrees of freedom, a semi-open capsule design, joystick control, and three pre-loaded ride games. The unit will operate as a passive ride as well. Delivery of the first units, priced just under $75,000, is scheduled for this month. Camber exhibited two other offerings in its introductory line of products including the Morphis 14- to 20-seat motion capsule and the StarGazer motion theater.

Thrillseeker's Voyager F500, developed by U.K.-based Leisure Dynamics, features an electric motion base, six degrees of freedom, fully automated closed cockpit, and an internal 38-inch monitor and sound system. The unit, also PC-based, premiered with Wipeout XL and a special preview of G-Police, both developed by PC game developer Psygnosis, which is a division of Sony Corp. and exhibited a developmental coin-op title at AMOA '97.

Stricor Inc. of Atlanta, ViRtogo Inc. of Chicago, and Astro Distributing of Rock Island, Ill., all showed single-player units that, while differing in costs and features, were aimed at larger arcades and FECs. Both premiered their systems earlier in the fall at the Fun Expo in Las Vegas.

Stricor's Xtreme Voodo is a semi-en-





TOP RIGHT: MaxFlight Corp.'s VR2002 roller coaster simulator

MIDDLE LEFT: Stricor Inc.'s Xtreme Voodoo debuted last year running Interplay's Descent II game, dubbed Xtreme Descent II.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Mariah Vision Entertainment's Vision Racing showcases a full size race car shell, three degrees of pneumatic motion freedom, and computer generated graphics

BOTTOM: Thrillseeker's Voyager F500, developed by U.K.-based Leisure Dynamics, features an electric motion base, six degrees of freedom, and a fully automated closed cockpit.

closed interactive motion seat attraction that is debuting with Interplay's Descent II game, dubbed Xtreme Descent II. Utilizing PC architecture, the simulator features interchangeable controls and a six-foot wraparound visual display. It can be operated as a stand alone coin-op attraction.

Company president Young Kim said the unit's price had been reduced considerably to just under $43,000 for the show. "We decided we wanted to sell software and not hardware," he said. "We want to build a relationship with our customers so we can both make money."

ViRtogo's FunPrint motion simulator game unit comes in two configurations, the 2000 and 6000, featuring two and six degrees of motion freedom and priced at $8,900 and $16,900 respectively. Both utilize PC architecture and the company's Cyber Air Base pneumatic motion platform. The 200 features 15 degrees of pitch and roll, 33-inch monitor, networkability up to four units, and a free-standing plug and play cabinet from AM&D. The 6000 offers all the same features as well as a 50-inch monitor.

Software for the FunPrint unit includes games from Luna Corp. (asteroid-shooting game Lunar Defense and 3D driver Lunar Rover); Entropy Engineering (the combat boat game Bermuda Triangle); and Total Illusion Inc. (bumper car adventure Bumppers and hovercraft simulator Flux).

Company president Brad Engstrand said both software and hardware are upgradeable on the turnkey systems. ViRtogo began as a provider of motion bases, but expanded into full scale game units when it met with resistance from existing game companies.

"I used to be an airline pilot and I built one of these (motion bases) in my basement," Engstrand said. "Nobody knew how to make it work until I developed my own software. I can see hundreds of potential titles. I think there is a vast pool in the PC world to provide games."

Astro Distributing showed Spirit Design Group's Viper XI, a single-seat fully enclosed motion simulator capsule that features a 28-inch monitor, the Diamond Stealth 3D 360-degree sound system, three degrees of motion freedom with interactive game play and graphics, networking capabilities for multiplayer participation, and a footprint requiring 58-square-feet of space.

By way of dramatizing its technology, Textron Motion Control also exhibited a single-player interactive motion seat, the Minuette from Oceanside, Calif.,-based Fantasy Factory. The unit elevates an occupant over nine feet off the ground, is networkable, can operate as a stand alone coin-op unit, runs any DOS- or Windows-based game, and offers configurable joysticks and controllers.

DELUXE MODEL SIMULATORS

The trend in interactive simulation was not limited to firms looking solely at the arcade and FEC markets. A number of companies showed products designed for more high-end locations:

Illusion Inc. of Westlake Village, Calif., introduced its Speed Sport technology which allows as many as 24 race car simulators to be linked remotely or on-location utilizing high-speed film projection.

Mariah Vision Entertainment of Suffolk, Va., exhibited Vision Racing, a stand-alone racing simulator that costs $67,500 plus 25 percent of gross revenue in royalties and features a full size race car shell, three degrees of pneumatic motion freedom, and computer generated graphics.

MaxFlight Corp. of Lakewood, N.J., displayed its VR2000 fully interactive flight simulator, priced at $115,000 with stand-up trainer unit, and its VR2002 roller coaster simulator, which comes with a customer programming kiosk and has a price tag of $125,000.

Motionbase plc, located in the U.K, presented its Explorer/1 single-player interactive motion simulator, which is networkable, can accommodate multiple game attractions, provides six degrees of freedom, and costs approximately $80,000.

Signifi group, based in Canada, exhibited its five-seat virtual reality motion capsule which integrates participants' 3D images into the game's action and is priced at approximately $150,000 for a passive ride and $225,000 for an interactive, joystick-driven experience.

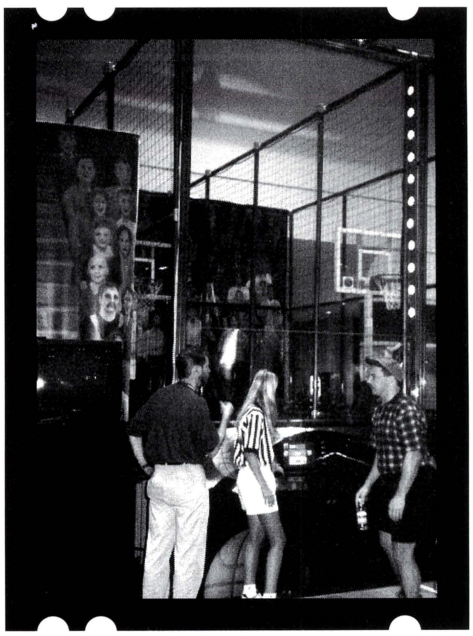
While the trend toward smaller interactive simulators was clear, IAAPA '97 saw no shortage of more traditional passive motion simulator capsules and theaters on the show floor. Capsule units, holding anywhere from two to 20 riders and priced from $80,000 to more than $350,000 were on display.

Exhibitors of both motion capsules and theaters included Adventure Quest, American Engineering S.A., Doron Precision Systems, Dynamax, Flight Aviotronics, Fortress Systems, Iwerks Entertainment, ITA-Explore, McFadden Entertainment Systems, Multi-Dimensional Studios, and Sim Ex.

AN ATHLETIC EVENT

Although just walking from one end of the IAAPA exhibit floor to the other constituted an athletic event, a number of stops along the way offered showgoers a chance to demonstrate their prowess at any number of sports.

The growing popularity of sports simulation experiences, noted earlier in the trade show season at Fun Expo, is best exemplified in the soccer simulation game *Kick-It*, developed by In-



In *The Zone* Ultimate Basketball Challenge pits players against a constantly adjusting basketball goal.

teractive Light of Santa Monica, Calif., and based on the PC hardware specification put forth for the coin-op industry by computer chip manufacturer Intel. *Kick-it* could be found in at least three different exhibits including Interactive Light's, H. Betti Industries', and ICE's booths.

Another company exhibiting a PC-driven sports game was Charlotte, N.C.,-based *In The Zone.* The company's *In The Zone Ultimate Basketball Challenge* pits players against a constantly adjusting basketball goal. An internal motion control logic system can adjust skill levels. Pricing, play time, points, bonuses, and prizes are all computer programmable.

The company has announced plans to link units and administer virtual leagues between locations. "You get repeat play and people will also want to practice," explained the company's Ronald Couturier. "We have plans to carry this game's infrastructure into other sports. We can do soccer and hockey today. Later, we will look at football."

Another company planning to offer more than one attraction in the same unit is Sports Simulation Inc. of Pleasantville, N.Y., which exhibited its *Designated Hitter* game in which players hit a real baseball and see the resultant play simulated on a giant screen. The company previewed its upcoming Multisport Simulator, scheduled for shipping early this year, which includes pitching, soccer, hockey, football, and tennis.

Mir Corp. of Lilburn, Ga., exhibited three of its deluxe full scale sports simulation games, which start at $65,000. They included the *Power Pass* football simulator, which challenges players to interactive with game action rendered in full motion video; the *Power Alley* batting game; and the *Power Hockey* attraction in which patrons play against a virtual goalie.

Other companies showing interactive sports simulation games included golf simulator manufacturers Full Swing Golf and Dead Solid Simulations.

THE EVOLUTION OF LASER TAG

While laser tag continues to play an important role in the out-of-home entertainment industry, market pressure have apparently consolidated the number of manufacturers and equipment vendors offering systems. Of those that have survived, a number introduced new systems at IAAPA while others have revised the pricing and packaging of their systems.

Two longtime players, Heads Up Technologies of Carrollton, Texas, and Ultrazone of Las Vegas, Nevada, introduced new scaled down systems at the show. Heads Up's new LaserTrek-LT system features a light weight vest designed to fit most players and a detachable laser. In addition to adults, the new vest will also fit most children ages five to 10 years old. Heads Up also offers its original LaserTrek-LDD system and a gun only system.

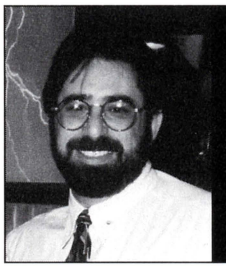
Ultrazone's new System-T is a lower-cost system that still offers premium features such as voice feedback, flexible games, membership programs, and detailed player scoring. The company also introduced its new System-Z at the show. System-Z is a real-time radio system which may be used as an upgrade to Ultrazone's standard laser tag product, offering game challenges, role playing options, and feature-packed software.

U.K.-based Veqtor Laser Tag `N Target presented its newest offering to the market, Veqtor Max, which utilizes three micro controllers per pack and can update scores in real time on the personal display of each vest. The system relies on real-time radio frequency.

Other companies exhibiting laser tag systems included the newly formed Stunner Corp. of Ceres, Calif., as well as Canadian-based Actual Reality International and Ascension Productions; Laser Chaser of Upland, Calif.; Laser Duel of Fayateville, Ga.; Laser Force of Emeryville, Calif.; LaserStar Technologies of Davie, Fla.; and LaserTron of Buffalo, N.Y. ▲

The times they are a' changin':

A LOOK AT THE FALL GAME LINEUP



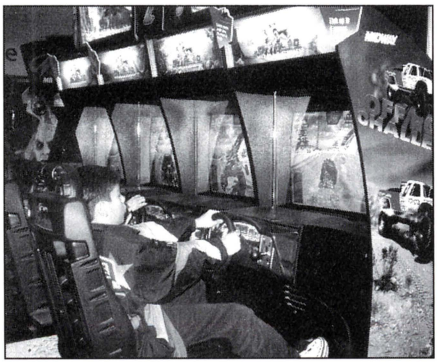
Michael Getlan is a third generation owner/operator of arcades and family entertainment centers and a member of IAAPA's Education, Technology, and Award Committees. He is director of operations for Amusement Consultants Ltd. of New Rochelle, N.Y., which operates 40 locations in 12 U.S. states and Central America, and is a frequent speaker at industry conventions.

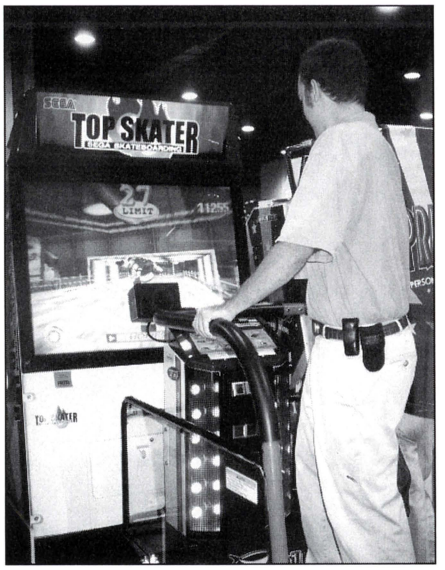
The fall show season is basically done, and I would say the schedule is certainly a draining one for those industry professionals who attend each of the three amusement shows. AMOA, the Fun Expo, and the IAAPA show, although a lot of work, were friendly, fun, and important both individually and collectively.

With the recent shifting of manufacturer's priorities resulting in a variety of different premier dates for the fall selection of amusement coin-op product, I will now be evaluating fall equipment as a group. All products that are complete and ready for release from the AMOA, Fun Expo, and IAAPA shows are fair game. Products that are incomplete or products that have been exhibited and released at earlier shows will not be reviewed.

I will not comment on the recent trend in photo sticker machines other than to say that I have tried them and am satisfied with the concept as a stand-alone idea. We will have to see which companies will be in this for the long term. Be careful and research well the machine that you choose to invest in. Especially important for the local market is the ability to offer different sticker backgrounds in the future.

Again, these game selections are mine alone, based on my experience and playing and buying strategies. These are the best games, in my opinion, that I have picked as an investment or potential one. I like to think that I buy the games with the most fun and the best return on investment. I would like to thank those distributors and operators who shared their thoughts with me as well as my staff.





TOP LEFT: ***Off Road Challenge*** **by Midway is linkable up to four players.**

BOTTOM LEFT: ***Top Skater*** **by Sega delivers high-tech skateboarding fun.**

BELOW: ***Motocross Go!*** **by Namco comes in both upright and deluxe models.**

SIMULATION

Top Skater (Sega): The best new simulator that is fun to play and has great player appeal. I have seen every different kind of player on this game. The hand grips made it safe for all ages. I think this game has a very long life.

Water Ski (Sega): This game is also very fun and very much like the briefly seen *Super GT* by Sega. High playability, but it's not linkable. That's its major flaw.

Final Furlong (Namco): Another nutty game by Namco. If your strategy is to give your players something they cannot get at home, this is it. A horse racing game which can link up to four players, this attraction is certainly unique if a little physically tiring to play. The game reminds me of ***Prop-Cycle***, but it has greater appeal since there is a competitive element. It's not for every location.

DRIVING

Motor Raid (Sega): Twin motorcycle

game that is linkable up to four bikes. The programming is different than a regular motorcycle game, but it only comes in the twin bike configuration. That's why I am also pointing out another motorcycle themed game.

Motocross Go! (Namco): This motorcycle game is available in a 50-inch deluxe and 29-inch upright cabinet and linkable up to four units. Its various configurations make it a better fit for operations with locations of different sizes.

Off Road Challenge and ***Cruis'n World*** (Midway): Of these two games, ***Off Road Challenge*** was a better buy simply because the game play was different from *Cruis'n*, which will soon be available as a kit. Both games are linkable up to four players.

Rush the Rock (Atari): This game is essentially an update kit to the popular ***San Francisco Rush***. It's basically the same game, still linkable up to eight seats, and an inexpensive way to extend the life of this driving game.

SPORTS

NFL Blitz (Midway): Great numbers, great football game (the only game that has ever been sanctioned by the NFL based on my info; it includes all the teams and all the players at this time).We haven't had a great football game in a while. Currently the 25-inch upright is available with a kit coming late this month.

Virtua Striker II (Sega): This game, when placed in the right location, makes consistent money. I am not a big soccer fan, but my guests really love this game. Previously, it was available only in the limited deluxe 50-inch version but now comes in a 33-inch edition.

SHOOTING

House of the Dead (Sega): Just about the highest producing shooting game I can remember. A great game with A1 functions and multiple game paths, it plays differently every time. It also has a green blood setting for those locations that prefer a less gory approach. This is a great game.

Lost World (Sega): A great tie-in to the movie, this mini-theater is not for every location because of its size. With room for two players, it has been hitting high numbers from the very first day. If you can fit it in, I recommend this unit. I have removed the curtains from the game. I feel the players in the United States are not as responsible as the players in Japan.

FIGHTING

Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter (Capcom): What can you say? This kit is a no-brainer—two of the most memorable brands of heroes advertised in comic books across the world—and affordable to boot! Available as an A- or B-style board. Do it!

Beastorizer (Namco): Namco does it again with a great earning kit. There are so few good kits out there that when one comes along you should not miss it. ***Beastorizer*** will probably not have the staying power of ***Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter*** because of the name brand recognition, but we need more than just a couple of fighting games to satisfy our guests.

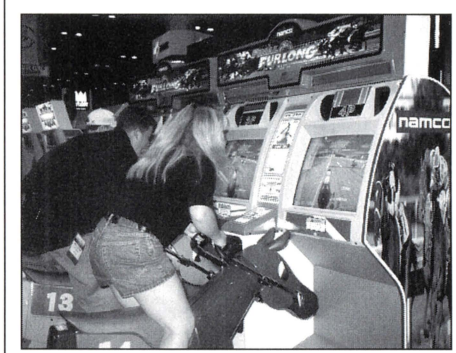
Mortal Kombat 4 (Midway): With a fall movie opening, this game has been given a tremendous advertising push (movie ads, comic books, etc.), but it's not for everybody. Caution is required here, as ***MK4*** has everything that initially created controversy when the product first debuted. I would try the game in almost any game room with an older demographic unless you're squeamish.

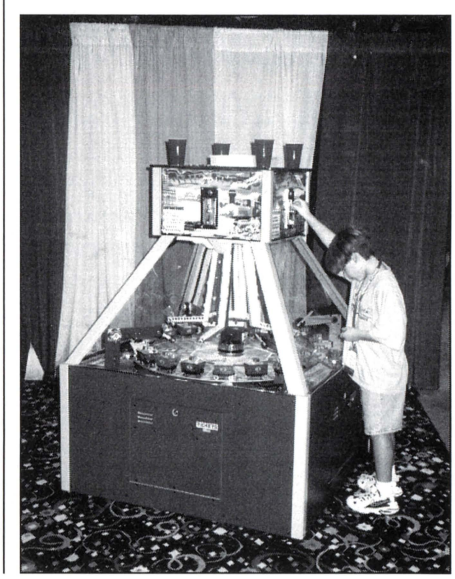
REDEMPTION

Claim Jumper (Benchmark): This may be the most creative new redemption concept at all three of the shows. Available in a three- or four-person version, ***Claim Jumper*** features 18 player cars, each one holding up to 180 coins, creating 18 separate jackpots. All I can say is I am anxiously awaiting delivery.

Prize Circus (Smart) and ***Sports Arena*** (Sammy USA): Think of them as vertical *Cyclones*, a timing game where the guest tries to catch a moving light. ***Prize Circus*** is bigger and able to handle larger prizes. ***Sports Arena's*** smaller size may give it greater application in a variety of locations.

Star Catcher (Seidel): Two-player coin roll game with a funnel or vortex in which the player tries to synchronize the launching of a coin with a

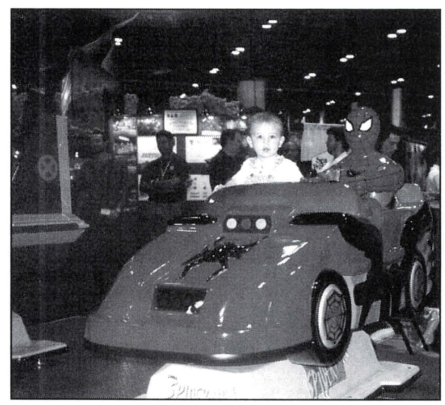




BOTTOM: ***Spiderman*** **by Kiddie's Mfg. has a character tie-in too great to miss.**

TOP RIGHT: **Namco's *Final Furlong* is something players can't get at home.**

BOTTOM RIGHT: ***Claim Jumper*** **by Benchmark is a creative new redemption concept.**



flashing light signal. Three coins can be played at one time with a doubling feature and a skill stop on this winner-every-time game.

Twister (Lazer-Tron): One-player coin roll game, also with a funnel effect, in which the player is trying to hit a target. A winner-every-time feature keeps guests with bad aim from going home empty handed. Players that can spell Twister by hitting the targets get the jackpot.

KIDDIE RIDES/PINBALL

Spiderman (Kiddie's Mfg.): What can I say? I like this character and think the tie-in with TV is just too great to miss. The Hulk is coming soon.

Harley-Davidson (Kiddie's Mfg.): Another great emotional tie with great staying power. I am always pushing for more interactive functions on kiddie rides, but there isn't much that you can do to a motorcycle. With this attraction, you can adjust the throttle noise and lights. It's amazing; even the kiddie rides are now brand names.

As for pinball, Sega Pinball released ***X-Files*** and ***Starship Troopers*** and Williams released ***Medieval Madness*** and ***Cirqus Voltaire***. I think with four different models to choose from each year, most operators should find a way to try each model in their arcades, either by leasing them from their distributor or quickly turning the pins around on the market. All of these games are fun. If you have a steady pinball clientele, you should find a way to expose them to these pins.

Most of the product that is coming out of the major manufacturers is, of course, being produced to their previously successful formulae. Most of the unique and different product is coming from smaller, independent companies, and that's what this industry needs, more interesting products to excite and interest our guests.

Some of the questions I am asking are:

1. What will the new generation of software developers create in the video field coming from the larger world of the consumer market?

2. How will that translate into associated products like redemption? Will it ever?

3. What can we expect down the road to attract a market demographic that is increasingly filled with experienced game players, many of whom cut their teeth playing home consumer games?

4. Can we learn to deal with a market that is used to a very different learning curve than traditional products in the industry have been designed to accommodate?

5. Is that lack of accommodation the cause of the lackluster performance of much of the product offered for sale to the operator today?

For many of these questions, the answer will not be forthcoming any time soon. I suspect that we will all be going to (at least some) of the various shows each year to look for the answers. Hopefully, this game review will be of some help in sorting through the information regarding the games available. ▲

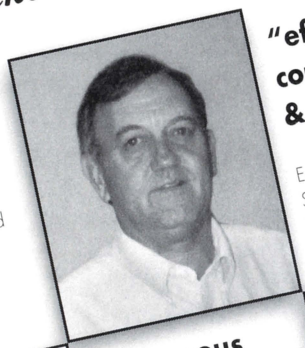
TOP: **Sega's *X-Files* capitalizes on the popularity of the TV program.**

BOTTOM LEFT: **Bally's *Cirquis Voltaire* dazzles on the playfield and backglass.**

BOTTOM RIGHT: **Capcom's *Marvel Super Heroes vs. Street Fighter* has memorable, recognizable heroes.**

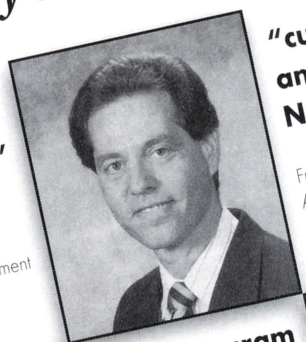
Sure, it *looks* good... but does it *work*?!

Don't take our word for it (or any other software company's) - ask the experts:



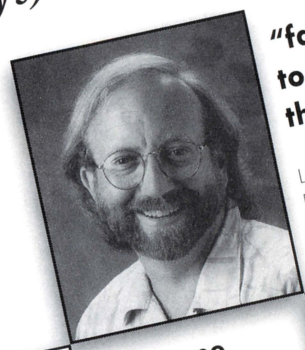
"effective, comprehensive, & complete"

Emery McElveen
Sumter Music & Amusement
Sumter, SC



"cutting edge and simply, No. 1"

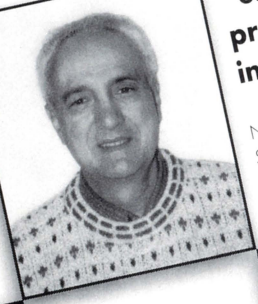
Frank Seninsky
Alpha-Omega Amusements
East Brunswick, NJ



"far superior to any on the market"

Lee Wesson *$
Peachtree Music & Amusements
Keyser, WV

Note:
Testimonials marked with an '*' indicate former Silent Partner customers; those marked with a '$' indicate former Premier Data customers.

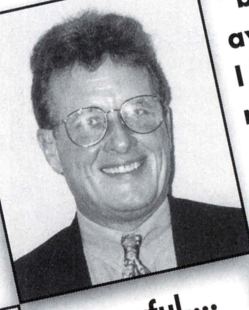


"enormous productivity increases"

Nick Circone*
Shaffer Services
Columbus, OH

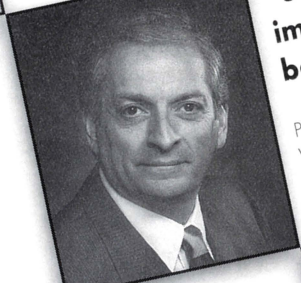
"only program that filled all of my needs"

Cara McNamara
Sports Plus
Lake Grove, NY



"best one available & I highly recommend it"

Jim Hayes*
Gem Music & Vending
Dayton, OH

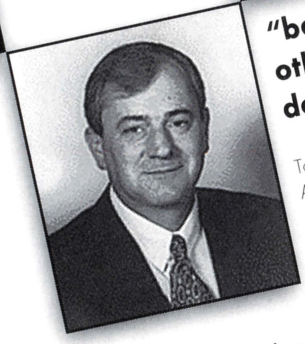


"strong impact on our bottom line"

Perry London
Wisconsin Novelty Company, Inc.
Milwaukee, WI

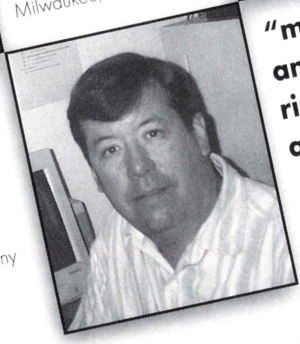
"powerful,... very user-friendly and easy to learn"

Debbie Rollins *
Total Vending Services
Atlanta, GA



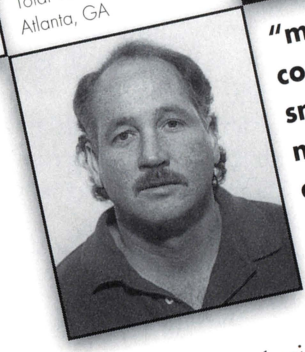
"beats the others, hands down!"

Tom Gould
Allied Vending Company
Corsicana, TX



"most flexible and feature-rich system available"

Chip Wood *
Robbins Vending Co.
Cortland, NY



"makes my company run smoother & much more efficiently"

Gary Spencer
Spencer Amusements Inc.,
Paso Robles, CA

It's easy to be fooled into buying nice-*looking* but *ineffective* route-management software, especially if you have to deal with companies that promise features that don't exist or salespeople who mislead you about competing products. Before buying, we suggest you talk with some people who are using the program you're considering and find out if the product is as good as the pitch. You'll be very interested (and perhaps surprised) at what you'll find! ***This is a great time of year to switch - start now and enjoy a more profitable 1998!***

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COMPANY
PROFILE

IMPERIAL doesn't stop at billiard supplies

Here are Michael (c) and Bert (r) talking with a customer at a trade show a few years ago.

One look at the familiar logo with the bright yellow billiard ball peeking out from the name "Imperial" is an immediate clue that this company specializes in all your billiard needs. However, there is not enough room to list all of the things you can actually get from Imperial International.

The front of the latest catalog says it best: "Everything in the world of parts and supplies for the amusement, vending, billiards, and gaming industries..."You must be starting to see that Imperial is much more than billiard supplies, although you can certainly get anything you need in that area!

THE EARLY HISTORY

Imperial International dates back nearly 40 years, but to trace its roots we have to begin with H. Betti Industries because Imperial International is a wholly-owned subsidiary, which also includes Betson Pacific, Fun Merchants, and New England Coin-Op.

Humbert Betti Sr. started it all. He was born in Argentina, migrated to Italy, and left his parents to seek his fortune in Scotland. He opened a chain of restaurants and became quite wealthy by the age of 27.

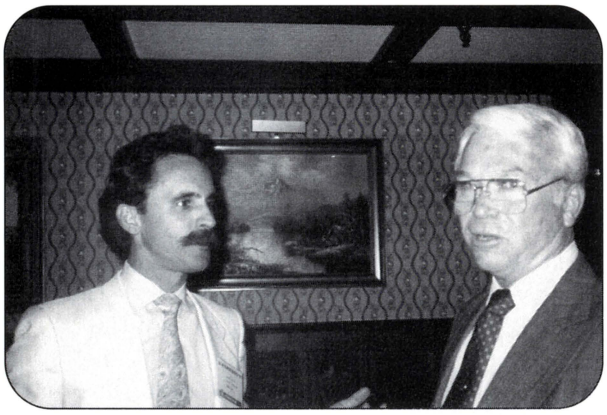
After World War I his success came to an abrupt halt as a result of some ill-conceived investments, explained his son Bert Betti, so he returned to Italy with his wife Catherine and his young family which consisted of four sons and two daughters. While there, among other jobs, he operated countertop games. Humbert Sr., still a young man, was fascinated by the stories of opportunities in the United States. He couldn't resist although it meant leaving his family in Italy until he got settled. By 1927 he had a successful restaurant in New York and, as a naturalized citizen, was able to bring his family over from Italy. Because of the law of derivative citizenship in force then, Humbert and Catherine's six children became United States citizens.

After Prohibition ended in 1934 Humbert Sr. and a partner began placing jukeboxes in taverns as they began to reopen. Humbert Sr. used the experience he had from his days of operating countertop games in Europe.

About two years later Humbert Sr. and his partner went their separate ways. Humbert Sr. went into the operating business full-time, naming his operation H. Betti & Sons. The "sons" part referred to Bert, Hugh, Eddie, and Louis. The jukebox business was so successful that soon pinballs were added to the growing route.

By the '50s Humbert Sr. had turned over the reins of H. Betti & Sons to the sons (except Louis who opened his own company, Dial Cigarette Service) with the eldest, Humbert Jr. (Bert) in charge. With the company in capable hands, Humbert Sr. and Catherine went back to Italy where they were to spend the rest of their lives.

However, retirement wasn't in the stars for Humbert Sr. A short time after the elder Bettis returned to Italy, bumper pool tables became popular in the United States. H. Betti & Sons bought a few and were impressed with the earnings. They weren't, however,



Michael DiMotta (l) with Al Morrison (International Billiards) at one of the first BCA shows around 1985. Michael now serves on the BCA show committee.

impressed with the particle board playfields which had a tendency to warp. These bumper pool tables cost less than $150 and could be set on dime play, quite a feat at a time when equipment generally demanded only a nickel. These tables were so successful they were paying for themselves in two weeks.

But, there were those lousy playfields. A friend reminded Bert that his father was living in Italy and Italy was famous for its slate. "Why not get your father to send over some slate for the bumper pool tables?" the friend asked. And that was how Bert began bringing in slates through a company called Eastern Novelty Co. owned with a partner. The name Imperial was used to denote a premium line of products. Humbert Sr. was the purchasing agent, eventually opening his own quarry because he was dissatisfied buying slate from others. In 1954 the partnership in Eastern Novelty ended and Bert adopted the name Imperial for a new division of H. Betti & Sons. Literally thousands of slates were sold to people like Joe Robbins, Bob Jones, and Si Redd. However, they were still buying the tables from Fischer Mfg., which would ship the tables without the playfields, and Imperial would provide the slates and other accessories.

Si Redd, a legend in the coin-op industry, suggested to Bert that he start distributing the tables since he was selling the slates already. That marked the beginning of the distributing end of the business. It was called Betson, the name a combination of "Betti" and "Sons." Many more lines of equipment would eventually be added.

With the tremendous success of the bumper pool tables, Bert jumped at the chance to distribute Fischer's new six-pocket tables. "Billiards was becoming tremendously popular, but people didn't have the supplies they needed," Bert noted. "There was one small company selling billiard supplies, but it didn't have anywhere near what was needed. So in addition to the slates, we began bringing in cues from Italy—as many as a million a year. We were supplying all the manufacturers except Valley. We also brought in balls from Belgium, which did then and still does make the best billiard balls. We then added many, many more products to our line."

Now we have the genesis of H. Betti Industries, Betson Enterprises, and Imperial International. And seeing the success of these companies, it's hard to imagine Bert as a self-described renegade in the industry in those early days. But he says it's true! He explained, "I was a bit of a maverick when Imperial began selling billiard supplies. There were old time vendors that I used to call The Club. Now here comes Bert Betti, a little upstart.

"One day I get a call from Bob Shoemaker, the salesman at Mali, who I bought billiard cloth from. He wanted me to give him a purchase order for 100 bolts of cloth. Now that was a lot, and I told him so. But he asked me to trust him, which I did, and sent the purchase order."

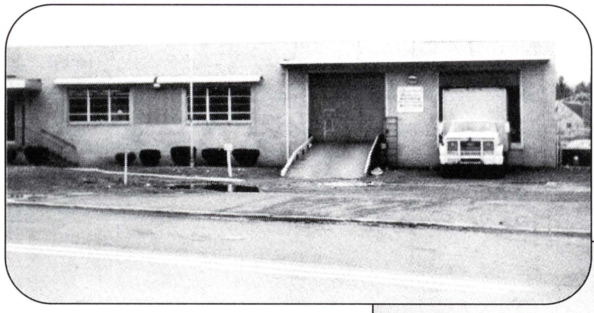
Bert continued, "A couple of months later I'm in Chicago for the AMOA show, and I had breakfast with Bob. I asked him about the purchase order for 100 bolts of cloth and he reluctantly told me the story. Apparently he had been called into a meeting with 'The Club' and they wanted him to stop selling cloth to Bert Betti. Well, Bob tossed that purchase order in the middle of the table and told them that if they matched my order, he'd consider it. And that was the end of the conversation!"

MORE THAN BALLS AND CUES

Bert has a number of stories about those early days, but it's obvious that Imperial garnered a loyal following because today it is still the major supplier of billiard supplies. It's line of billiard products calls for an entire catalog totaling some 70 pages. But Imperial goes far beyond billiard supplies. The company now has two product mixes including after-market parts for the coin machine industry. Although started for billiard supplies, Imperial, is now one of the leaders for machine parts.

In 1974 Imperial signed on Minnesota Fats to endorse the product line.

At a recent trade show, (l-r): George Montalvo, Paul Cardea, Michael DiMotta, and Bert Betti.



Imperial has come a long way from its humble beginnings.

If you thought the billiard supply catalog was big, then the parts catalog can only be described as immense! The index lists things like alignment tools, bezels, fuses, capacitors, cleaners, coils, switches, shifters, E-PROMs, fans, flyback transformers, locks, glue, hand trucks, harnesses, joysticks and controls, keys, counters, microprocessors, multimeters, power supplies, rejectors, test equipment tokens, tools, wire cables, and more.

THE STAFF

Imperial is now run by Bert's son-in-law Michael DiMotta. DiMotta met his future wife, Bert's daughter Susan, at a party given by his best friend, who just happened to be dating Susan's best friend. At the time, Michael had a career in special education teaching handicapped children. A few years after marrying Susan, he was offered a job at Imperial. Bert recalled how impressed he was: "The day Michael started we gave him some catalogs, assigned him a territory, and sent him on his way. Do you know, he wrote orders that first day!"

But we found out Bert had been impressed with DiMotta even before that. It seems that when Susan and Michael began talking marriage, Michael went to Bert's house and asked for his permission to marry his daughter. "I was really impressed with Michael's old-fashioned approach. In this day and age it was refreshing," Bert offered.

DiMotta worked as a salesman from 1978 until John Rafer, who was running the company at the time, left for personal reasons in 1982. DiMotta then assumed control and has been at the helm ever since. He's seen the company grow, but points out that there were some particularly rough times.

When DiMotta became president of Imperial, the industry was in a tremendous slump, as he explained: "We closed the New Jersey warehouse and with a staff of about six worked in facilities in the back of the Betson warehouse. We worked like that for about six years. The business began to grow with every passing year. Finally, I approached Peter (Betti), Bob (Geschine), and Joe (Cirillo) and told them that Imperial needed its own space. It was right after our move that the movie 'Color of Money' took not only this country, but countries all over the world by storm. The billiard industry has been on a roll ever since."

Imperial sells to manufacturers, retailers, operators, those who specialize in home recreation products, and distributors. About two years ago, they opened a sales office in Chicago. Today Imperial has 80,000 square feet and 60 employees in its three offices. The company wholesales billiard equipment to retail speciality stores, sporting goods stores, coin-op distributors, and operators. In addition, Imperial sells to major catalog companies like Sharper Image and American Express. Imperial also has a very extensive export business selling not only after-market coin-op parts, but also full-line billiard product worldwide. Imperial has a mammoth booth at the BCA show, which caters to retail sales, players, and home billiard users.

According to DiMotta, "Imperial International is the largest billiard accessory distributor and the only full-line billiard distributor in the United States. By that I mean not only accessories, but also tables. Imperial is EVERYTHING IN BILLIARDS!"

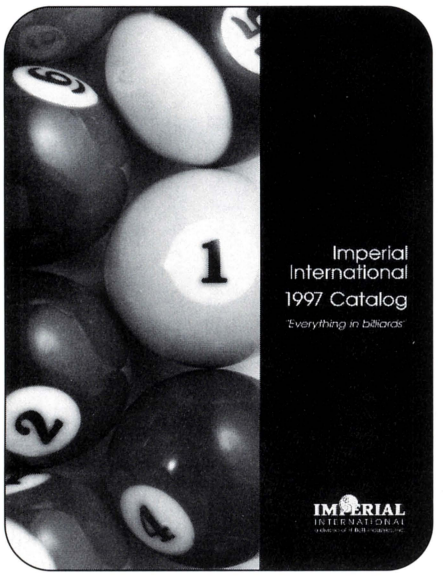
Obviously, to run such a large company takes a competent, knowledgeable staff. Imperial has just that. DiMotta, like his father-in-law, delights in giving credit to those whose tireless efforts add tremendously to the success of Imperial. Turnover is relatively light as Bert explained, "People never seem to leave us. We have men that started with us and retired with us."

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES:

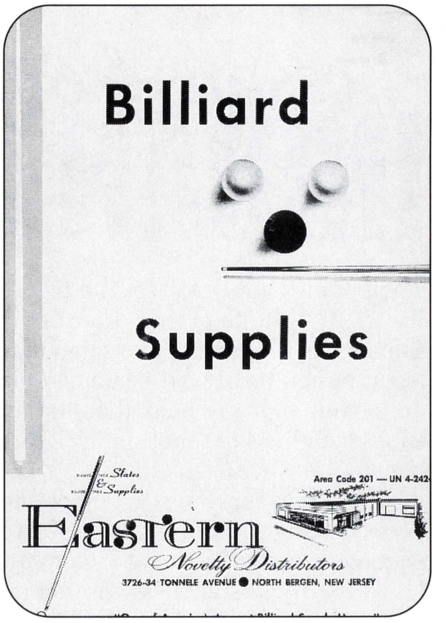
Mike Bathalter is the western sales manager in the California office. He's been with Imperial for over 20 years. Before joining the company, he manufactured pool tables in his garage. Imperial employee Chick Frankel had been with the company for many years. When he passed away, Mike assumed

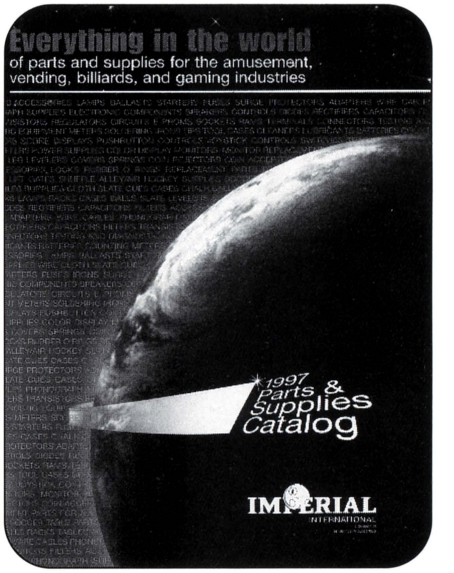
Bert Betti (c) and John Rafer (r) at a Taiwan trade show in 1975.

Here is one of the first catalogs.



The latest billiards catalog.

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his position to run the California office.

Michael Cetinich is the eastern sales manager. He's been with the company 22 years, beginning as a warehouse manager. Through hard work and dedicated sales effort, Michael now runs the billiard sales department.

Paul Cardea heads up the coin machine division and has been with Imperial 11 years. He came from Penn-Ray in an interesting way. DiMotta and Cardea spent endless hours on the phone doing business over the years. At one point Imperial entertained the thought of buying Penn-Ray, and although Wico ultimately bought it, Imperial got Paul and three other salesmen. Bert told us that Paul was responsible for getting the coin-op division and its comprehensive catalog started.

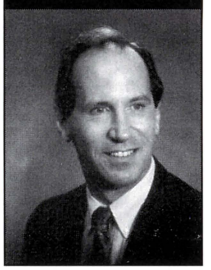
Charlotte Robles, the office manager, has been with Imperial over 25 years.

Jerry Gaglione is responsible for all national accounts and major catalog companies like American Express, Diner's Club, etc. Because of Imperial's thrust into the catalog business the company was successful in selling a nostalgia jukebox through a major catalog. "This only proves that there is no limit to where you can market through direct mail catalog," noted Gaglione.

THE FUTURE

Imperial has come a long way since the days of selling slates for the Fischer bumper pool tables and its 12-page catalogs. But the company is still looking ahead for new growth in a number of areas. The OEM division, selling power supplies, track balls, gun controls, locks, etc. is one area that looks to be growing. "We are really moving along in those areas. We're selling to Atari and Williams. And as far as quality, if we're approved by companies like Williams and Atari, I'd say our quality has to be good," noted DiMotta. ▲

LEGAL EAGLE



TOM FRICKE

Lessons from INDIAN COUNTRY

Tribal government gaming has been under furious attack since it began. With Congress' passage of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) of 1988, each recognized tribe was authorized to conduct bingo, pull tabs, and non-banking card games on tribal land. There are more than 600 recognized tribes. Moreover, the IGRA allowed the tribes to conduct bingo and (some say) pull tabs by the use of "technological aids." The IGRA gave a label to this type of "acceptable form of gaming": Class II.

The law also gave a name to banking games like craps and blackjack and, of course, slot machines: Class III. In 1987, the Supreme Court of the United States held that states could not prevent Indian tribes from conducting a wide range of commercial gambling activities on their lands. The IGRA was Congress' response to this. Congress didn't enact the IGRA to promote tribal self-sufficiency. Indeed, Native Americans who live on tribal lands don't have representatives in Congress. Rather, Congress intended to *restrict* tribal government gaming and set up a federal agency to regulate it. For this function, Congress authorized the formation of the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC).

To restrict the "profitable form of gaming" Congress required that before any tribal government could operate a casino, it had to have a written agreement for this with the state in which tribal land was located. The IGRA provided that if any tribe endeavored to discuss such an agreement with its state but the state refused to negotiate in good faith, the tribe had to sue the state in federal court. If the court found a bad-faith refusal to negotiate, then (and only then) the Secretary of the Interior could authorize the tribe to operate a casino on its land.

This meant that each tribe wanting to get into casino gaming had a long, hard, and costly path to follow to obtain the approvals it would require. Then, things got worse for the tribes. In 1996, the Supreme Court—the same court that had opened the door to casinos on tribal land—slammed the door shut tight. It held that Indian tribes couldn't sue states under IGRA because as sovereigns the states are immune from suit. Since this Supreme Court decision, many of the states have negotiated casino agreements anyway. However, these states' power to limit the numbers of slot machines and to require payment of a share of the net wager (a tax on economic activity on Indian land, otherwise unthinkable) is now unchecked.

The tribe desiring a casino has no power in the negotiation and can only "jawbone." The bottom line is that now, 10 years after the Supreme Court opened the door to tribal government gaming, only about one-third of the recognized tribes have any sort of casino operation on their land. Two-thirds of the tribes are faced with the real possibility that they will never obtain authority to operate a viable casino and that if they want to benefit from their new right to conduct gaming, they will have to make the most of a Class II operation with bingo, pull tabs, and poker.

It should be the policy of Congress to foster tribal government gaming. Much tribal land is remote from major metropolitan areas. Isn't it better policy to require that gaming sites be destinations not readily available to large numbers of people more or less on spur-of-the-moment impulses? Also, much of the expansion of for-profit corporate gaming has been justified to policy makers on the basis of providing jobs and other "trickle-down" benefits. Casino development on tribal lands provides this, but it also provides a direct benefit. All of the profits go to fund tribal government services. This is no small matter for most tribal governments cannot tax and can provide services only when funded through the profits of tribal-owned business activity.

Being dependent on Congress to define the extent to which they may pursue this particular form of economic activity, tribes are confronted with a few harsh realities. The first, I have mentioned. They have no votes in Congress. The second is that substantially every senator and every representative (excepting those from Hawaii and Utah) are from states that themselves operate lotteries and therefore tend to view all other forms of lawful gaming as competition.

A third reality is that many states have been penetrated by big gaming, which can now influence votes and which also tends to view all other gaming business as competition. Finally, and perhaps this is the harshest reality of all, both the IGRA and the regulations of the NIGC have been a source of confusion to substantially all concerned as to what the dividing line is between Class II and Class III gaming. Despite this, the NIGC has not as yet set itself up as an approval agency with a formal process for reasoned case-by-case classification of individual types of gaming equipment.

The result of this last problem has been a supreme irony. In fashioning the IGRA, Congress was extremely concerned that tribal government not be infiltrated by organized crime. I am told this objective has been achieved. However, in creating the IGRA and the regulations of the NIGC, both Congress and the agency it created inadvertently diverted a material share of the profits of this new gaming activity not to *La Cosa Nostra* but to the legal profession. I speculate this due to the unceasing torrent of litigation spawned by this act of Congress and the regulations of the agency it created.

This unfortunate situation offers several lessons for those of us involved in the business of amusement redemption. First, just as the dividing line between redemption and gaming is murky, so is that between Class II and Class III tribal government gaming. Let

me give you an example. You walk up to a freestanding machine and insert currency. The video screen shows a simulation of slot machine reels that spin, then stop, displaying a number of symbols. Then, regardless of the combination displayed a paper pull tab drops into the hopper. You are given to expect that the symbols displayed on the pull tab, after you have opened it up, will be the same as are displayed on the machine. Is this a Class II pull tab device, available to 600 tribes, or a Class III slot machine available to 200 tribes? Under the IGRA and NIGC regulations, pull tabs are Class II but slot machines are Class III. Moreover, even though the IGRA says that pull tabs are Class II, the regulations of the NIGC provide that anything that violates the Gambling Devices Act of 1962 (the Johnson Act) is Class III. What violates the Johnson Act? Practically anything that is designed for use in gambling and which by reason of the element of chance entitles the player to receive money or property. Could this be a pull tab with or without the technologic aid? Without telling you what my personal assessment of the issue is, suffice it to say that the matter is in suit right now with two tribes and the equipment manufacturer on one side and the Attorney General of the United States, three states (California, Florida, and Alabama), and the NIGC on the other. All because important classifications are ambiguously stated in the law and because of a "sacred cow" view of the Johnson Act. Both amusement redemption and Indian gaming are entitled to laws and regulations that eliminate doubt as to important questions such as this. However, in both cases the laws don't eliminate any doubt. They create doubt.

I see a second parallel between tribal government gaming and amusement redemption in that big corporate gaming seems to be the political enemy of both, and both are under represented in the legislature. Big corporate gaming has turned the Johnson Act from a tool to combat *La Cosa Nostra* (as originally intended in 1962) to a sacred cow in its political design to suppress competing forms of playing games for prizes. In this case of tribal government gaming, the overbreadth of this statute—its prohibitions may be broad enough to apply to the "coins in your pocket"—have been written into the regulations of the NIGC. This means that the IGRA authorizes pull tabs, but the implementing regulations prohibit them. This in turn means that the field is wide open for selective enforcement. It proves that definition of gambling exclusively by means of abstract characteristics doesn't work. The same may be said of the Johnson Act when applied to amusement redemption. With respect to both amusement redemption and Class II tribal government gaming, there is an urgent need for bright-line definitions and available, affordable, reasonable, and authoritative regulatory classifications of individual equipment items and a regime of classifications in which policy issues may be considered and which is not slavishly bound to abstract definitions. ▲

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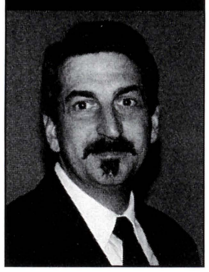


RANDY FROMM

Troubleshooting SMPS primary failures

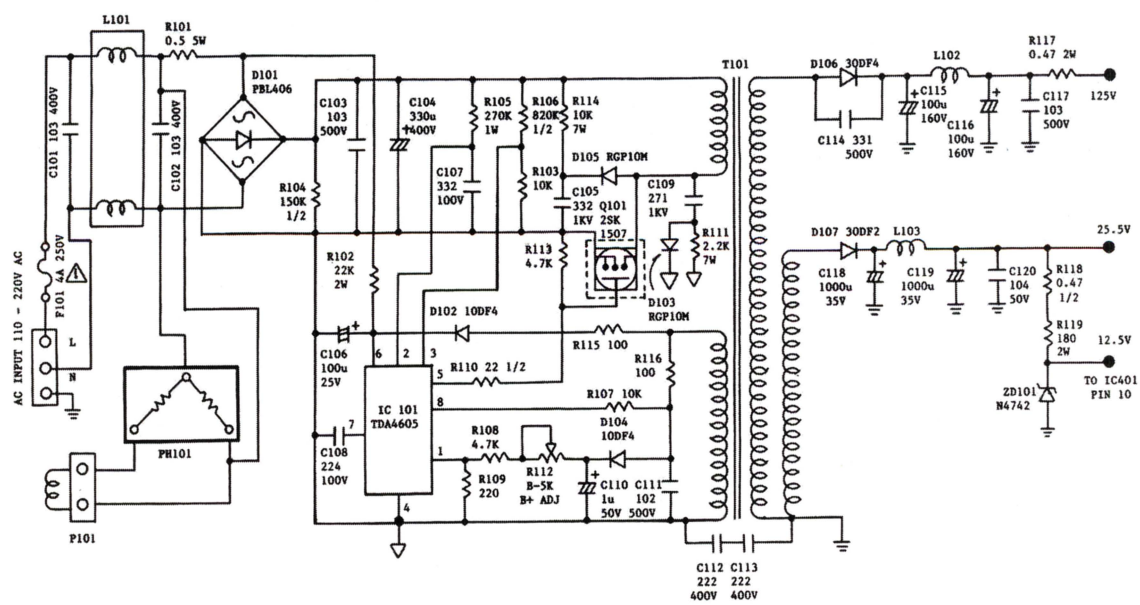
A Play Meter Monthly Exclusive

Modern monitors for computers and video games use "switched mode power supplies." The SMPS has a few advantages over conventional or linear power supplies that have, until now, been de rigeur for monitors. Most notably, the monitor will operate over a wide range of AC input voltages.

Typically, an SMPS monitor will operate normally with line voltages as low as 85 volts or as high as 265 volts. That's a really wide operating range, especially when compared to a linear power supply's maximum deviation of only plus or minus 10 percent of the normal input voltage. This makes the monitor suitable for use all over the world, from Japan (where the AC line voltage is just 100 volts) to parts of Europe and the rest of the world where the line voltage is 220 or 240 volts AC. This the so-called "free-voltage" or "voltage free" feature you often see advertised by monitor manufacturers. In some countries, especially in the third world, where the line voltage fluctuates as much as 20 percent, making the SMPS the only workable solution to the lack of line regulation.

Another advantage is that a monitor with a switched-mode power supply doesn't require an isolation transformer during normal operation. Isolation is handled by the power transformer in the SMPS itself. It should be noted, however, that the primary side of any SMPS is NOT ISOLATED from ground and, as such, deserves caution and respect. If you accidentally ground any part of the power supply's primary side (such as by touching it with the grounded tip of a soldering iron) you will blow it up. Literally. You will blow the traces right off the PCB, possibly damaging a bunch of other stuff as well.

A third advantage is "over-current protection" or OCP. OCP will shut



In the NEOTEC NT-25E, the output voltage of the B+ power supply is controlled by the voltage that is rectified by diode D104 and filtered by capacitor C110 before being passed through a voltage divider resistor network to pin 1 of IC101. If C110 fails, the output voltage of the power supply will rise, tripping the H.V. shutdown circuit in the monitor.

down the SMPS if the output of the power supply has too great a current demand placed upon it. Typically, this will occur only when the horizontal output transistor short-circuits and/or a flyback transformer fails.

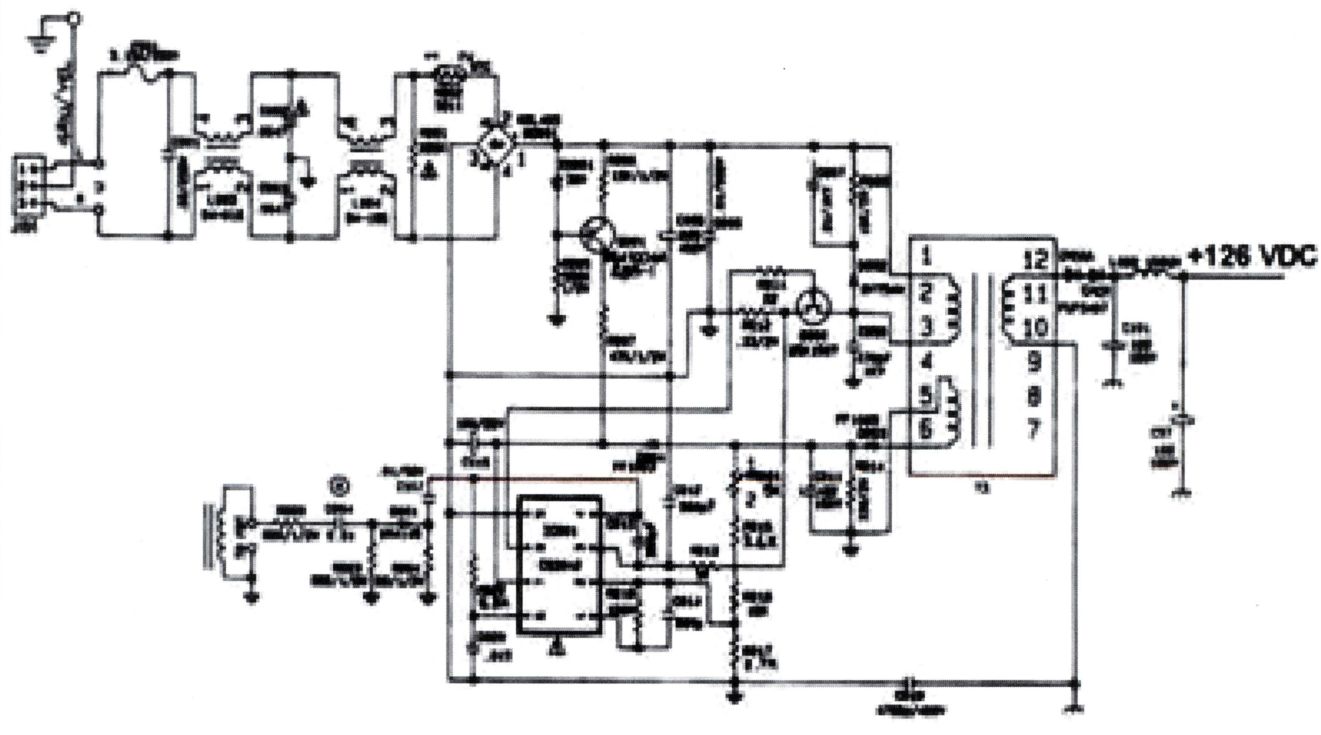
CIRCUIT OPERATION AND FAILURES

Regular readers of *Play Meter* and this column are already familiar with how the SMPS works. In switching supplies, the AC input is first passed through a fuse and a bridge rectifier. It is then filtered by a large electrolytic capacitor. Typical value is 200 microfarads. In order to make the monitor accept input voltages as high as 265 volts, this filter capacitor must have a voltage rating of 350 volts or higher. So far, this is no different than a conventional power supply.

A transistor is then used to switch this supply across the primary winding of a transformer. Monitors use a MOSFET (metal-oxide semiconductor, field-effect transistor) for its ability to handle large amounts of power. This switching action is very fast. Typical switching speeds range from around 40 khz to 100 Khz.

An integrated circuit is used to control the transistors. This IC controls not only the frequency at which the transistor is switched on and off but the amount of time that the transistor is allowed to remain energized. The output voltage of the power supply is determined by the "on" time of the transistor. If the transistor is kept on for a longer period of time, the output voltage of the supply will be higher while shorter on times will lower the output voltage. This is known as "pulse-width modulation" or PWM. More on time means a greater pulse width if we were to look at it with an oscilloscope.

In free running flyback converters, the integrated circuit (such as the TDA4605) assumes control of a MOS power transistor and all necessary regulation and monitoring functions. The serial circuit of power transistor and primary winding of he flyback transformer is connected to the Input voltage. During the switch-on period of the transistor, energy is stored in the transformer and during the switch-off period it is fed to the load via the secondary winding. By varying the switch-on time of the power transistor, the IC controls each portion of energy transferred to the secondary side such that the output voltage remains nearly independent of load variations. The required control information is taken from the Input voltage during the switch-on period and from a regulation winding during the switch-off period. A new cycle begins as soon as he energy stored in the transformer has been totally delivered to the secondary side.



In the Wells-Gardner k7201, the output voltage of the B+ power supply is controlled by the voltage developed at pin 5 of transformer T3. This voltage is rectified by diode D003 and filtered by capacitor C011 before being passed through a voltage divider resistor network to pin 2 of IC001. If C011 fails, the ouput voltae of the power supply will rise, tripping the H.V. shutdown circuit in the monitor.

In different load ranges, the SMPS will behave as follows:

• **No-Load Operation:** The power supply unit oscillates in non-continuous mode at a typical frequency of 20 to 40kHz. Depending upon the transformer winding and the regulated voltage divider, the output voltage can be slightly above the nominal value.

• **Normal Operation:** Starting from typically. 200kHz the switching frequency falls with increasing load and decreasing AC voltage. The duty cycle depends primarily on the AC voltage. The output voltage is only slightly load-dependent.

• **Overload Point:** Maximum output power is available at this point of the output characteristics.

• **Overload:** The energy transferred per operation cycle is limited at the top. Therefore, the output voltage will fall with secondary overloading.

The output of the transformer (which is now alternating current) is then rectified by special high-speed diodes to change it back to direct current. This output is not pure DC however and requires extensive filtering to remove the high-frequency "noise" that is generated by the rapid switching action of the transistor. Filtering is accomplished by using a combination of coils (also known as chokes) and capacitors.

Unlike the Peter Chou type of SMPS where the output voltage of the power supply is regulated by feeding some of the output back to the integrated circuit that controls the switching transistors, the SMPS in a monitor uses a kind of sensing winding on the power transformer itself. This provides a somewhat less direct method of regulating the output by sensing the magnetic flux of the transformer instead of measuring the output voltage directly.

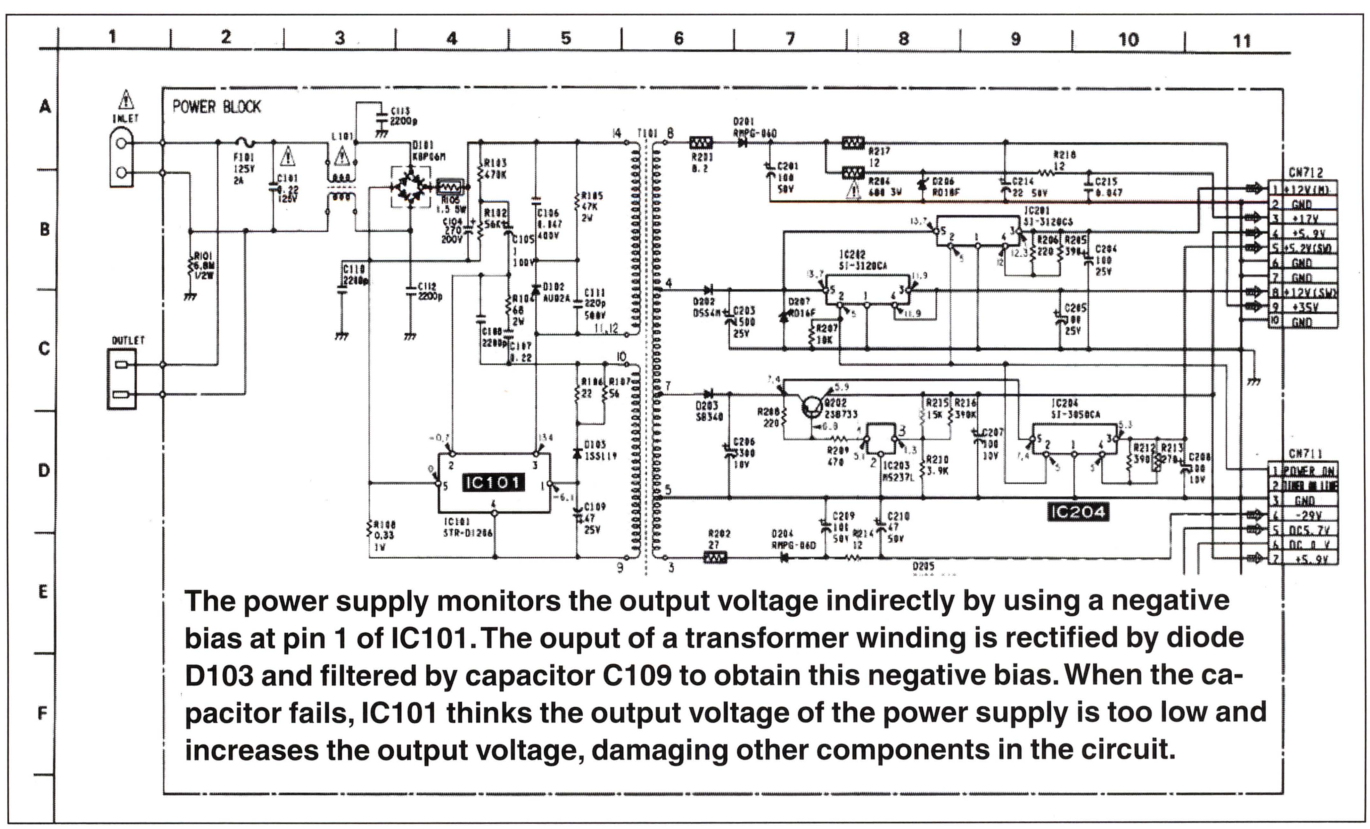
The AC output of the sense winding is rectified by a diode and filtered by a capacitor to give a DC reference that is directly related to the output voltage. That is to say, if the output voltage goes down, the sense voltage will fall as well. This will signal the IC to increase the "on" time of the switching transistor and raise the output voltage back up to where it should be. If the output voltage should rise too high, the voltage developed by the sense winding will rise too, signaling the IC to cut back on the amount of time the transistor is allowed to stay on and allowing the voltage to drop back to where it should be.

POWER SUPPLY FAILURES

In general, there are only a few components that fail on the primary side of a switched-mode power supply. The most common failure is the switching transistor itself. The transistor short-circuits, causing massive amounts of current to be drawn across the transformer and blowing the fuse. Another possible failure is the bridge rectifier. This is the same whether it is a linear power supply or an SMPS. The integrated circuit that drives the MOSFET might also be bad.

But there is another, rather more insidious failure that can occur on the primary side of an SMPS. It's one of those types of failures that can drive you crazy if you don't know what's going on but is actually quite simple to understand and troubleshoot once you get a handle on the nature of the problem.

And the problem is that capacitors fail. I know I've said it again and again



The power supply monitors the output voltage indirectly by using a negative bias at pin 1 of IC101. The ouput of a transformer winding is rectified by diode D103 and filtered by capacitor C109 to obtain this negative bias. When the capacitor fails, IC101 thinks the output voltage of the power supply is too low and increases the output voltage, damaging other components in the circuit.

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but you know it's true: Capacitors are guaranteed to fail. In this case, common capacitor failures aren't limited to just the primary and output filter capacitors. Remember the reference voltage that is derived from the "sense" winding on the power transformer? When the filter capacitor in this circuit fails, the reference voltage drops. This causes the integrated circuit to increase the pulse width to the MOSFET, boosting up the output voltage to a level that is much higher than normal. In fact, this is just about the only failure that can cause the output of an SMPS to go too high.

Naturally, this trips the X-ray protection circuit and causes a high-voltage shutdown in order to prevent excessive radiation. In some systems (not necessarily monitors) this same failure can cause all kinds of damage. When the output voltage rises due to a bad cap on the sense line, it can fry components on the secondary side. When you get to the problem, you will probably (and logically) assume that the shorted components are themselves the cause problem and change them. However, as soon as you fire the unit back up again, they'll fry once more due to the fact that the power supply has run away and is producing way too much output voltage.

This happened to me recently on one of the editing VCRs I use to produce the Arcade School videotapes. I had found and replaced a shorted zener diode on the secondary side of the power supply. The diode had shorted, activating the OCP and shutting down the supply. Thanks to the miracle of over-current protection, it didn't even blow the fuse!

I replaced the zener diode but the instant I turned the unit back on, the replacement zener smoked. The was absolutely nothing on the secondary side of the power supply that could have caused this problem. Logically speaking, it had to be a problem on the primary side. I had to be something that was causing the power supply to go over-voltage.

But how do you test the theory when the power supply instantly fries stuff? You don't have time to make any measurements before destruction begins. To verify, I had to isolate the secondary side of the power supply by unsoldering and lifting one end of all the output diodes. With the transformer secondaries isolated, I could fire up the power supply and measure the output voltage of the power transformer's secondary windings (AC of course!) I measured 35 volts at what should have been the 12 volt winding and that was enough confirmation for me. I began looking at the primary side for something that can cause the power supply's output voltage to become so high.

In my experience, the integrated circuit is a go/no go type of device. If you get it to do anything at all (output-wise) it's good. In this case, we must have an output from the IC or the output of the power supply itself would be zero. Our problem is that the duty cycle of the primary side of the power supply must be too high! That pretty much leaves resistors and capacitors as the likely culprit. Between the two, I'll take capacitor failure every time. In this case, it was capacitor C109 that was bad.

Since this type of failure is becoming more and more common, I no longer bother to isolate the secondary and measure the output voltage of the transformer. When I encounter H.V. shutdown in a monitor with an SMPS, I look for this capacitor and change it first. If that doesn't work, I will look elsewhere.

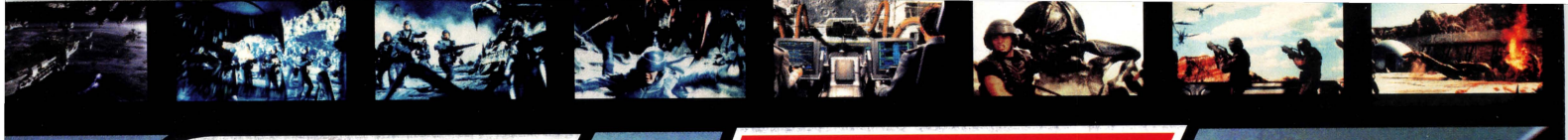
Author's note: I want to take a moment to thank some people and companies who have helped me quite a bit lately. First of all, I'd like to thank the participating companies that donated time and/or equipment to the Technician's Obstacle Course that I held at the recent AMOA show in Atlanta. Thanks to Williams, Sega Pinball, Wells-Gardner, Sharp Image, Pentranic, Deltronic Labs, Entropy, Micro Mfg., Micro Touch, Rock-Ola, Incredible Technologies, PartsStar, CAIG Laboratories, Mars Electronics and especially Tony Hana of HanaHo games who gave us a presentation on a quick fix for a common optical gun failure. Thanks Tony.

Technicians: Some of you (quite a few of you, actually) were upset that you didn't know about the technician's program far enough in advance to make arrangements to come to the show. With that in mind, I'm asking you to plan now to attend the Technical Olympics at this years ASI show March 26-28, 1998 at the Sands Expo Center in Las Vegas, Nevada. It will be a really fun and educational program featuring a series of short technical seminars on everything from ticket dispenser repair to the latest in PC based games. Yes! They're here at last! Naturally, there will be prizes as well for those who compete and prevail in the Olympics. For more information, call William T. Glasgow and Associates at (708)333-9292 or fax (708)333-4086. Tell 'em Randy Fromm sent you.

A double thank you to Wells-Gardner Electronics for sponsoring the Chicago Arcade School at their factory. Forty-one students attended the class from as far away as California and even a student from Italy! A personal thank-you to Mark Kamerowski, Chuck Hedrick, and Anthony Spier for making our time so enjoyable. Students took a factory tour while we were there and saw, first-hand how W-G manufactures the monitors. One student, Dean DePauw of Metro Amusements in Streeter, Ill. even won a brand-new, 25-inch monitor donated by Wells-Gardner for the school. For those that like to plan ahead, next year's Chicago Arcade School will be held at Wells-Gardner Nov. 2-6, 1998.

See you at the Arcade School! ▲

For further information or answers to your technical questions, contact me at 1944 Falmouth Dr., El Cajon, CA 92020; (619)593-6131; fax (619)593-6132; e-mail (randy@randyfromm.com); or Web site (http://randyfromm.com).



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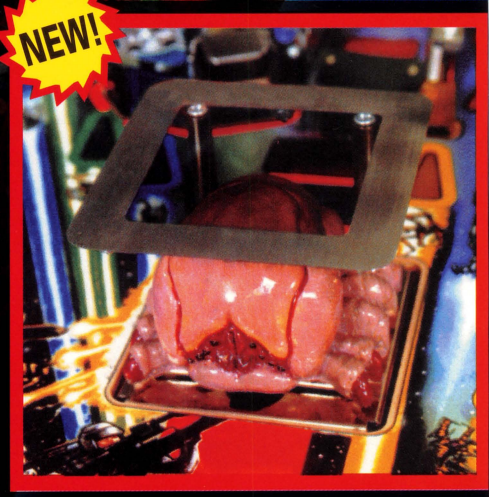

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PLAY METER magazine

VOLUME 24, No. 1 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT/FEC INDUSTRY JANUARY 1998

Annual Report: State of the Industry

1997 INDUSTRY VITAL STATISTICS

Industry gross annual income:	$6.5 billion
Number of locations	
Arcades:	6,500
Street:	210,000
FECs:	2,500
Total Locations:	219,000
Number of operators:	3,500
Games on location:	1.3 million

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PLAY METER magazine

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January 1, 1998

Dear Readers,

We sincerely thank those who took their valuable time to complete the four-page survey that we use to compile the State of the Industry results. Each year we rely on these loyal readers who participate so we'll have the information we need to take a candid look at how the industry is faring.

As you'll see when you delve into the survey, the industry took a turn for the worse. This dip was reflected in just about every equipment category. To some it will be a shock, to others it'll simply be proof they were right all along. But we've come to expect near miracles in our industry and no matter how far the pendulum swings to the negative, it's bound to swing back. However true that is, it does seem that the swing is a little more intense.

While the numbers are telling, the operator comments say a lot. We hear it all, from the poor soul who simply scribbled the word "HELP!" to those who wrote pages of opinions. We've printed two of the more vocal ones to give you a clearer understanding of how operators are coping and to show the backdrop for the numbers we got from our readers.

One unwelcome smack of reality is sobering. The gross annual revenue, hovering in the $7-$8 billion range for years, has dipped to $6.5 billion. But to put it in perspective, industry revenues were even lower before the video boom of the late '70s and early '80s. After an all-time high, the numbers began to fall, but we've never seen $4 billion again and probably won't. That's good news. But then equipment costs, overhead, expenses, etc., have never been higher. Investments have soared. Competition is fierce.

Since *Play Meter* has been compiling industry statistics for 20 years, we feel that our numbers reflect the core of the operating community. We understand that some of you will scoff at the results since your business is not living up to even these seemingly devastating numbers. But there will also be those who will bask in the knowledge that their business is soaring high above the averages. And neither is wrong. These are averages based on the numbers from a core group of operators with very diverse businesses. There's the operator who claims his video games only make $10 per week and one who reports his average at $1,000 per week. This was the first year that we tried to separate street operators from FEC operators. In some instances, you'll see how vastly different these two groups report their numbers. Then sometimes they are similar. The majority of the respondents are street operators either operating street locations only or in combination with arcades and FECs.

As with any survey, there is always a margin for error. We are printing this survey report to give our operator readers a general idea of how the industry is doing. We sincerely hope that the results will not be used out of context or for purposes negative to the industry.

Again, thanks to those who made this report possible. We'd also like to invite operators to the ASI show's operator party where we will be presenting the *Play Meter* Operators' Choice Awards and naming Operator of the Year. These awards are the ones you voted on at the top of this year's state of the industry survey form. We are proud to tell the entire industry which games operators have chosen as tops in their categories. See you there!

Valerie Cognevich

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

Letters

WE NEED NEW GAMES AND NEW PRICES

We operate a route (100 pieces) and a small FEC (game room with laser tag). I have been in this industry since 1979, primarily as a customer service tech for manufacturers. In 1990 I began operating a small route and have built up the business from there.

In regard to the Microsoft/Intel platform, I firmly believe that the video game segment of our business cannot survive if we continue to do business as usual. Due in part to rehashed themes and higher costs, we have lost much of the creativity from game designs. All we can get now is fighters, guns, and drivers with better graphics than the previous models.

It's not just the manufacturers' fault; those are the only games that sell in any numbers. Why? Because over the years, we have driven away all but a small fraction of our player base from game rooms and street locations. This is hurting the health of everyone in the business.

My apologies to Williams, but higher play pricing does not work even with high-tech graphics. We need to accept the fact that we provide low cost entertainment, and that we compete with other forms of recreation. People are only willing to spend X amount of dollars per hour for coin-op entertainment. You need only to look at the success of well run nickel arcades to see that at the right price, this stuff is popular. The players today have grown up with video games so there is no longer a novelty effect. We need to either provide something dramatic or something inexpensive.

In order to increase our player base and revenue, we must install new games more frequently, and we must offer real variety. This cannot be accomplished with $3,000 kits and $5,000 uprights. Everyone will eventually go bankrupt. It is imperative for the overall health of our business that we give MORE developers access to our business and that the financial risks are minimized. This can only be done by using standard hardware and a low cost method of distributing software (like a CD). I am not offended by the notion that I am providing pre-home release advertising for these developers. Hell, I do that now and the manufacturers want me to cover all of their development costs as well!

Please understand that I am not anti-manufacturer; we are all in this together. Most video game manufacturers have died or left the business and the Big Three remaining have gained a greater percentage of the market. This seems good to them, and I am sure that they want it to stay that way. But let me ask my fellow operators, do you really feel comfortable with only these suppliers controlling your future?

Neal R. Zook
Ocean Amusements
Hollister, CA

IT'S WHAT WE MAKE IT

For the most part, the state of the industry is what we make it. Do we cry doom and gloom or do we work to make it a good year? I chose the latter. Our business and profits are up. It's because we provide good (not necessarily new) equipment and superior service. We can't budget the money for a lot of new equipment but our customers would rather have the service.

Here in Texas we're embattled with 8-liners. The major problem is those who are greedy and paying cash are bringing major headaches to those of us operating legally. Enough said.

At the recent AMOA show, some people were happy, some were disappointed at the turnout. I am finding good niche equipment that is not the norm for our usual video and pinball business. Each booth should be given a chance. Many exhibitors are crying about the attendance. Like them, it is expensive for a small operator to show up. What they are not seeing is the dozen or so friends and competitors who didn't come, but who have called before I got home to find out about the show.

There is much more to say about the state of the industry, but there's just not enough time!

Thanks,
Dick

General Business

Operator comments on the Microsoft/Intel proposal:

"If Microsoft would stop bullying, it could be a good thing."

"I think we all need more information on what they'd like to do for us."

"It's beginning to sound like developer interest has fallen off, but I believe it to be the only future left to us."

"More game choices can only help the return on investment."

"They have to prove themselves to this industry before I can support them."

"It sounds good but we still need the new hits—more important than the system."

1. **Do you operate:**
   - 5% Arcades only
   - 44% Street locations only
   - 15% FECs only
   - 15% Arcade/Street/FEC locations
   - 3% Street/FEC locations
   - 3% Arcade/FEC locations
   - 14% Arcade/Street locations

2. **How many locations do you have?**

1997		1996
6,500	Arcades	12,000
209,000	Street locations	273,000
2,600	FECs	2,700

3. **How long has your company been in business?**

1997	1996
Average: 19 years	Average: 22 years

   - 37% 10 years or less
   - 40% 11 to 25 years
   - 23% Over 25 years

4. **Was your family already in the business when you started?**
   18% yes 82% no

5. **In which region do you operate?**
   39% East 24% West 37%Mid-region

6. **Have you opened or closed an FEC in the past year?**
   10% Opened 13% Closed

7. **Have other FECs opened or closed in your area in the past year?**
   29% Opened 40% Closed

8. **Have you experienced any unfair competition from manufacturers cutting into your operating business?**
   36% Yes 64% No

9. **Do you feel that manufacturer-owned facilities can add to the favorable image of the industry because of their investment in both the facility and publicity?**
   28% Yes 72% No

10. **What is the target age of customers in the majority of your locations?**

24 years	Street Locations
Under 18 years	FECs *(many stated simply "families" instead of specifying an age)*

11. **What is your share of the location's split?**

	1997	1996	1995
GAMES			
Traditional 50/50	69%	77%	77%
Get over 50%	28%	22%	21%
Get under 50%	3%	1%	4%

MUSIC			
Traditional 50/50	64%	70%	*
Get over 50%	32%	26%	*
Get under 50%	3%	4%	*

12. Do you use a computer in your business?

	1997	1996	1995
Yes	90%	78%	75%

(23% of those who said they did NOT use a computer are street operators.)

13. Do you use a route management or industry specific software?

36% Yes 64% No

14. Do you use the Internet for business regularly?

33% Yes 67% No

(When we asked whether operators used the Internet in 1995, only 18% said they did. This percentage is sure to go much higher next year.)

15. Does your business have its own Web site or e-mail address?

35% Yes 65% No

(Like the previous question, this percentage will certainly rise next year.)

16. Do you visit industry publications' Web sites?

42% Yes 58% No

(If you haven't visited any, why not check out www.playmeter.com)

17. During the past 12 months, how have the following fared?

	1997	1996	1995
COMPETITION			
increased	34%	29%	33%
decreased	17%	16%	18%
stayed the same	49%	55%	49%
LOCAL ECONOMY			
increased	38%	21%	21%
decreased	20%	34%	37%
stayed the same	43%	45%	42%
YOUR BUSINESS			
increased	42%	32%	*
decreased	22%	40%	*
stayed the same	36%	29%	*

18. How many employees do you have (including yourself)?

Average for the following types of operators

54 (FEC only) 4 (Street only) 15 (Combination)

19. Are you a member of the following associations?

	1997	1996
AMOA	48%	53%
IAFEC	7%	7%
IAAPA	19%	*
State	31%	42%
NAMA	5%	*
Other	5%	*

(Last year we did not offer any other choices. We were surprised to see 19% of our respondents said they are members of IAAPA.)

20. Do you pay a per machine license fee?

39% No 61% Yes

(Of those who pay a per machine fee, the amounts ranged from $10 to $300. The most common response (42%) was between $25-$50.)

Operator comments on the Microsoft/Intel proposal:

"Competition is always better for industries. If Windows 95 is any example, our games won't work."

"Add three years to the projected date if Microsoft is involved."

"I can't imagine it will make games cheaper. In fact, the depreciation will be worse than normal arcade pieces."

"It's inevitable. Lead, follow, or get out of the way!"

"There must be a hidden motive. I don't trust Microsoft!"

"How do you control a giant gorilla?"

"I'm very excited about it; easier conversions, cheaper."

Operator comments on the Microsoft/Intel proposal:

"Kill it! It will be bad for us. Gee, how much did Nintendo 64 help our industry?"

"It's promising if done correctly."

"No matter what happens, we can't keep taking it in the shorts from the existing manufacturers so let's take a chance."

"Microsoft is greedy. Beware."

"I think it's a lot of smoke."

"If they can provide a new selection of games at affordable prices, GREAT! It is getting too difficult to purchase all the new high-priced games."

"I've supported it all along. I hope it will revive the video game industry."

21. Would you prefer a master license fee?

	1997	1996
Yes	27%	67%
No	28%	33%
Not Sure	45%	*

22. What is your opinion on the dollar coin?

- 8% We should eliminate the dollar bill and use the current Susan B. Anthony coin
- 36% We should eliminate the dollar bill and get a new dollar coin
- 20% We should get a new dollar coin but keep the dollar bill
- 36% We should just forget the whole thing and leave things as they are

23. Do you have a personal relationship with any of your LOCAL legislators?

72% No 28% Yes

(Those who said yes named the following: mayor, representative, congressman, governor, and city council member.)

24. What do you think about the National Amusement Network Inc. (NANI)?

- 37% It's still a viable project and AMOA should continue with it
- 22% It's dead in the water, AMOA should move on
- 40% I don't know what it is

(In 1995 59% did not know what it was.)

25. What do you think about the Microsoft/Intel proposal?

- 7% I don't think it will add anything to our industry
- 22% I'm excited about what they are doing
- 5% I plan to buy the first games offered
- 14% I will not buy the first games released
- 52% I don't have enough information

26. Do you plan to work with your local distributor when purchasing PC-based games?

36% Yes 12% No

52% I'm not sure what role the distributor will play

27. Do you plan to buy a laser tag system?

9% Yes 84% No 7% Already did

28. Do you plan to buy a motion simulator?

13% Yes 79% No 8% Already did

29. Are you utilizing any type of network tournaments?

14% Yes 86% No

(Of those answering yes, 77% of them specified they were using Incredible Technologies' Golden Tee Golf. Other responses included Arachnid and NANI.)

30. What is your annual budget for new game purchases?

Dollar Amount

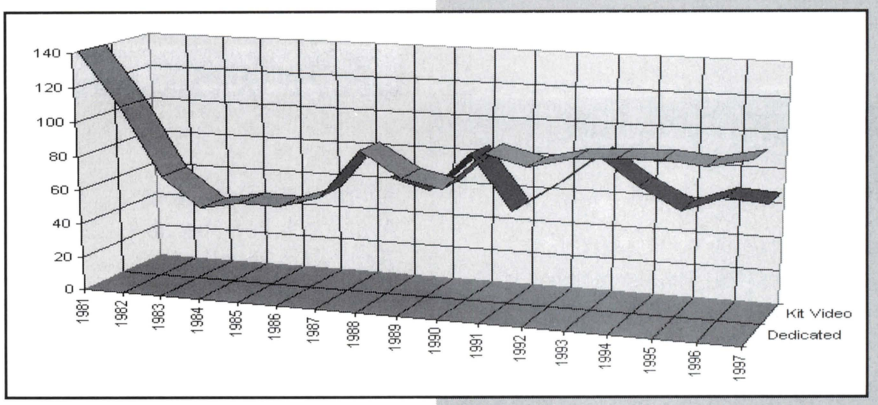
FEC operators	$54,000
Street operators	$95,000
Combination operators	$103,000

Percent

64%	Over 20% of gross profit
36%	15% or less of gross profit

(The most common answer to this was 20% - 25% of gross profit)

Video Games



Dedicated Video Games

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$100	$95	$97
Average # Per Operator:	93	120	109
Total # On Location:	384,000	470,000	500,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$1.9 Billion	$2.3 Billion	$2.5 Billion
Total New Purchases:	43,000	34,000	37,000

90% operate videos *(Down from 98% last year.)*

- While the overall weekly gross average was $100, the average in FECs was $177; in a typical street location it was only $86.
- Those operating in only street locations said 40% of their product mix was video; those operating in FECs only said it was 35%; and for those with a combination of locations it was 60%.
- Roughly 58% said they would consider leasing video games.
- 60% said they have bought fewer video games in the past 12 months.
- While the issue of a rating system continues to draw attention, just 50% are concerned that the government will intervene with its own rating system if the industry doesn't do it themselves.
- Operators said the average life-span of their dedicated video games was a little over 3 years.

Price Per Play

(New Games): Only 17% charge 25 cents; 69% charge 50 cents; and 14% charge 75 cents or more.

(Old Games): 88% charge 25 cents; 12% charge 50 cents.

(Simulators): 28% charge 50 cents; 31% charge 75 cents; and 41% charge $1 or more.

46% plan to look beyond the coin machine industry for video game software.

Kits

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$67	$69	$60
Average # Per Operator:	76	101	90
Total # On Location:	273,600	365,000	385,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$953 Million	$1.3 Billion	$1.2 Billion
Total New Purchases:	38,000	45,000	45,000

- The average life-span of a video game kit was 2 years.
- 50% said they have a surplus of video game cabinets.
- While the overall average weekly gross was $67, in FECs that average was nearly double at $120 and in street locations it was $59.
- 57% think that manufacturers are backing out of an agreement to sell kits in the United States when they are available in other countries; 1% said they're not; and 42% said they're not sure.

Operator comments:

"There are not enough good ones."

"Video games are a necessary evil."

"Gun, driving, and golf games are saving the industry. Fighting games are dead."

"Good kits must be sold immediately without the dedicated first. It's the only thing that will save our business."

"They should not be available to the home market for 12 months after the release."

"Most kid's street locations are gone, but vids still are good in taverns and arcades."

"If the manufacturers want a healthy industry, they have to help with more kits, lower costs, and more innovative titles."

"Manufacturers better watch out. All of the cabinets we're stuck with may be their coffins."

"We need more of those Namco and Williams hits of the early '90s."

Countertops

Operator comments:

"Countertops draw the same players (as other more expensive equipment) and make more money with less service."

"The industry is very slow. The only thing doing well is countertops."

"If you're comparing return on investment, countertops win hands-down."

Countertops

	1997
Average Weekly Gross:	$94
Average # Per Operator:	28
Total # On Location:	53,000
Annual Gross Revenue:	$259 million
Total New Purchases:	24,000

54% operate countertops

How often should you update software for maximum earnings:

39%	every six months
24%	every year
31%	every six months or less
4%	more than a year

- 45% said they bought more countertops than they did last year
- 15% operate countertops in FECs

COMMENTS ON COUNTERTOPS

Editor's Note: *This is the first year that we have extracted countertops as a separate category of equipment. In previous years their earnings, purchases, and number on location were included in the video game category. As you can see, the earnings are impressive especially when compared to the initial cost of the equipment. An interesting fact is that everyone agrees that updates must be offered at least twice a year to keep them earning. We've also added this as a new category in our Operators' Choice Awards to be given out during the ASI show in March.*

Electronic Darts

Operator comments:

"It's easy to get caught up in the doom and gloom, but there are ways to make money."

"Hard work is alien to many operators. Running leagues requires lots of it."

"You can't make it in this industry if you don't want to work."

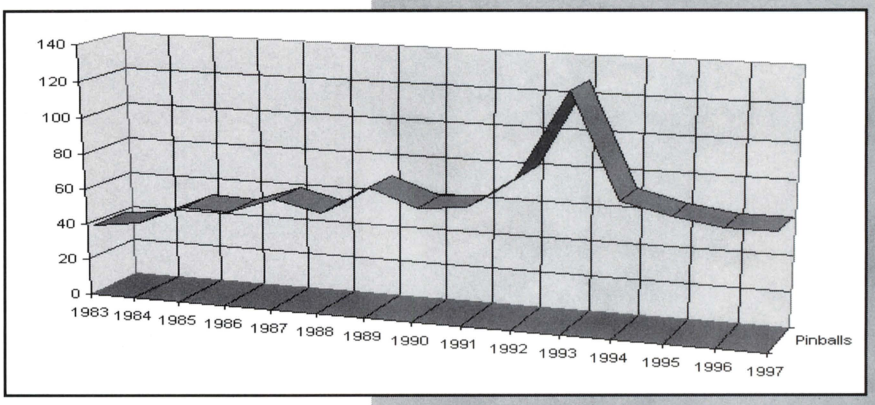
Electronic Darts

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$41	$45	$51
Average # Per Operator:	38	43	41
Total # On Location:	80,000	92,800	98,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$170.5 Million	$217 Million	$260 Million
Total New Purchases:	9,000	11,000	14,000

52% Operate Electronic Darts

- Less than 1% of those operating electronic darts were FEC operators.
- When asked if they thought FECs were good locations for darts, 18% answered yes.
- Of those operating electronic darts, half of them are doing so with a league program.
- Only 55% of those operating electronic darts said they made new purchases.

Pinballs



Pinballs

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$62	$62	$66
Average # Per Operator:	30	45	40
Total # On Location:	95,000	163,000	160,000
Annual Gross Revenue:	$306 million	$525 million	$546 million
Total New Purchases:	11,000	15,000	24,000

90% operate pinballs

56% said they bought fewer pinballs than last year; 44% bought more.

Average life-span:
26% less than one year
38% between 1-3 years
36% over 3 years

Price Per Play
91% more than 25 cents on new pinballs
44% more than 25 cents on older pinballs

- Although the overall weekly gross average per machine is $62, the average in FECs is $77.
- 10% said they paid less than $3,000 for a new pinball; last year that number was 33%
- 90% said they paid over $3,000 for a new pin
- 9% of those paying over $3,000 for a new pin said they paid $4,000 or more
- The average operators said they paid for used pinballs was $1,300.

How much do you charge per play?

More than 25¢ on new pins **91%**

More than 25¢ on older pins **44%**

Operator comments:

"It's pretty steady, but not a lot of new players. Little kids can't get the concept and quit."

"Pins are too complicated to keep clean and are not reasonable to maintain."

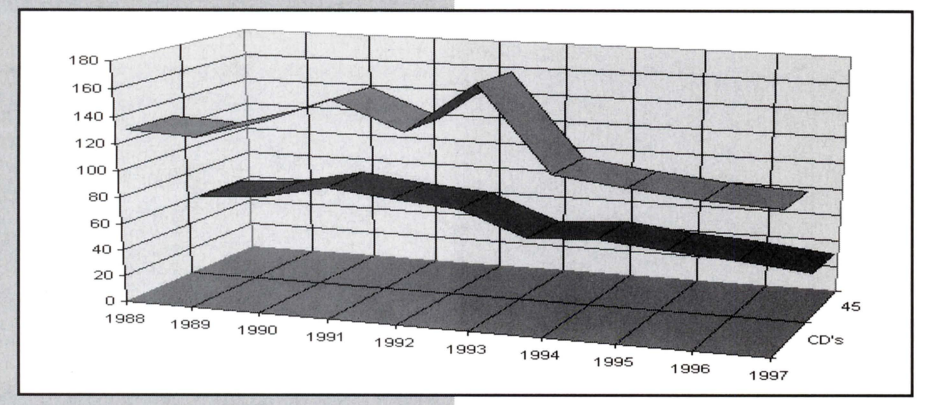
"There was a strong rebound in the last year. There is no used product available at distributorships."

"It's slow but we still need them."

"Pinballs cost way too much. Compare the return on investment with that of a video kit like Capcom's system II games. Pinballs just don't stack up."

"The player base is shrinking."

Jukeboxes



Operator comments:

"Downloaders could get too greedy. If the price is reasonable, the business will take off."

"Digital downloading music may happen, but we'll not use it unless the money is right."

"Operators are not interested in downloading music."

"Downloading will be great, less going to locations to change discs, and there's an instant popularity chart."

"They won't need operators in five years with downloaded music."

"What happens if the company offering downloaded music goes out of business?"

"Jukeboxes are holding their own."

"I am looking forward to digital downloaded music. I'm hoping it'll be less expensive than CDs."

CD Jukeboxes

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$100	$103	$108
Average # Per Operator:	34	45	46
Total # On Location:	82,000	119,000	130,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$426 Million	$640 Million	$730 Million
Total New Purchases:	9,500	10,000	17,000

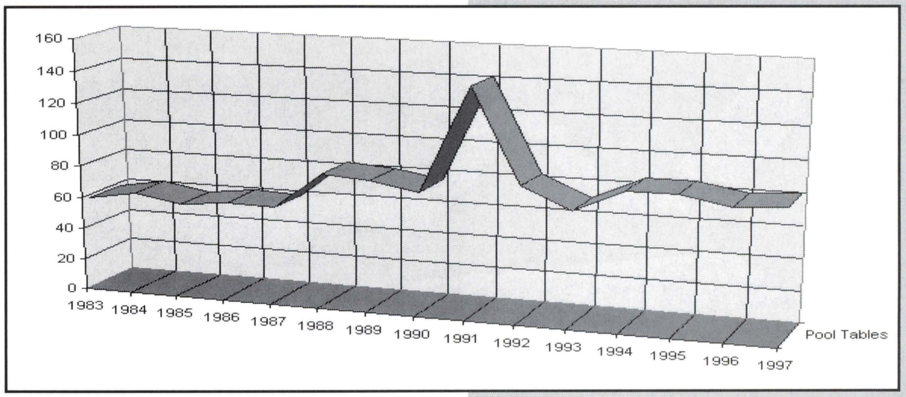
60% operate jukeboxes
(down from 65% last year.)

- 70% of those operating jukeboxes also still operate 45 rpm jukeboxes.
- 57% said that digital downloading music will replace jukeboxes as we know them, but not anytime soon.
- 10% think it will happen very soon.
- 33% said that digital downloading music will never take the place of current jukeboxes.
- 72% said that revenue sharing with a digital jukebox will NOT be more profitable than the traditional purchase and commision split.

45s

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$33	$39	$42
Average # Per Operator:	13	19	23
Total # On Location:	18,000	49,000	53,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$30 Million	$99 Million	$115.7 Million

Pool Tables



Pool Tables

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$82	$80	$85
Average # Per Operator:	48	47	27
Total # On Location:	116,000	133,000	122,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$495 Million	$553.2 Million	$535 Million
Total New Purchases:	12,000	12,000	23,000

69% operate pool tables

- 68% reported the average life-span of their pool tables to be 10 years or more.
- The average life span in an FEC was just 7 years.

Price Per Play

- 44% charge 50 cents per play
- 41% charge 75 cents per play
- 15% charge $1 per play

(Note: not one of our respondents listed 25-cent play!)

- Respondents noted their price per hour ranged from $2.50 to $6.
- 30% of those operating pool tables are running leagues or tournaments.

Operator comments:

"Pool is one of the basics that we've taken for granted until the bottom falls out of the industry. Then we realize how important it is."

"Variety gives an operator a chance to remain competitive and still make a profit by specializing in different areas."

"Things are very difficult in many segments of the industry."

"Stick to the proven equipment like pool tables and you'll be around next year."

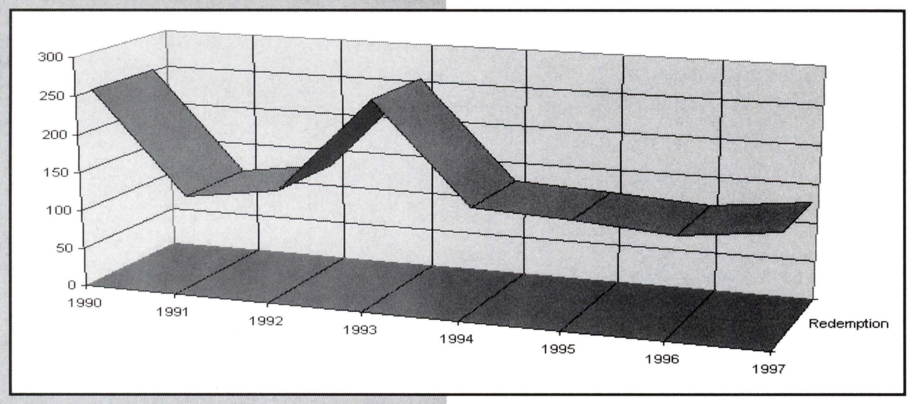
"With a shrinking market, we must obtain new market shares to stay even."

"With low weekly grosses, we need many, many machines to make it worthwhile. It's a long-term investment."

"I'm cautiously optimistic about the industry."

"We can't make it with short-term products like video."

Redemption



Operator comments:

"Redemption is hurting, but not as bad as video and pinball."

"Present laws are archaic. Redemption should not be considered gambling."

"Operators need to increase payouts and improve merchandise."

"Redemption is good, but only if run properly."

"I check with my prosecuting attorney if I have a question about legality."

"Redemption is a nice way to keep some locations happy and profitable with a different approach."

"Why buy new redemption at ridiculously high prices when you can get good used equipment for a fraction of the price?"

"Keep your prizes up and your redemption income will stay up."

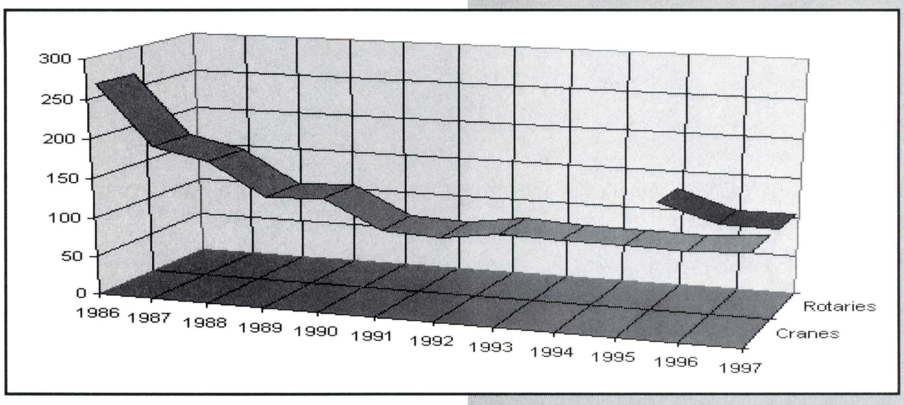
Redemption

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$135	$121	$130
Average # Per Operator:	53	64	56
Total # On Location:	106,000	125,000	120,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$744 Million	$786 Million	$811 Million
Total New Purchases:	16,000	20,000	31,000

57% operate redemption/novelty
(Up from 49% last year.)

- 5% plan to add it to their product mix.
- 63% said that redemption has a place in street locations.
- 51% said that they bought fewer redemption pieces this year.
- 58% said they are expanding their redemption operations.
- 71% said they separate their redemption from video games in locations.
- 19% said they do not use a special computer program to track inventory.
- 28% said there have been attempts to make redemption illegal in their areas.
- 69% said they are aware of the laws regarding redemption equipment in their areas; 25% said they don't know the laws; and 6% said they just go by what other operators tell them.

Cranes & Rotaries



Cranes

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$110	$106	$107
Average # Per Operator	12	18	13
Total # on Location:	30,000	51,840	43,500
Total Annual Revenue:	$172 million	$285 million	$242 million
Total New Purchases:	7,000	8,000	9,400

71% operate cranes

(Only 40% of those who said they operated cranes said they purchased new ones.)

- 63% said they bought fewer cranes than last year.
- 62% operate standard cranes
- 38% operate candy cranes
- 18% operate watch/jewelry cranes

Rotaries

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$114	$109	133
Total # On Location:	3,000	4,800	5,000
Annual Gross Revenue:	$18 million	$27 million	$34 million
Total New Purchases:	500	1,000	1,000

22% operate rotaries

Operator comments:

"Redemption equipment needs help."

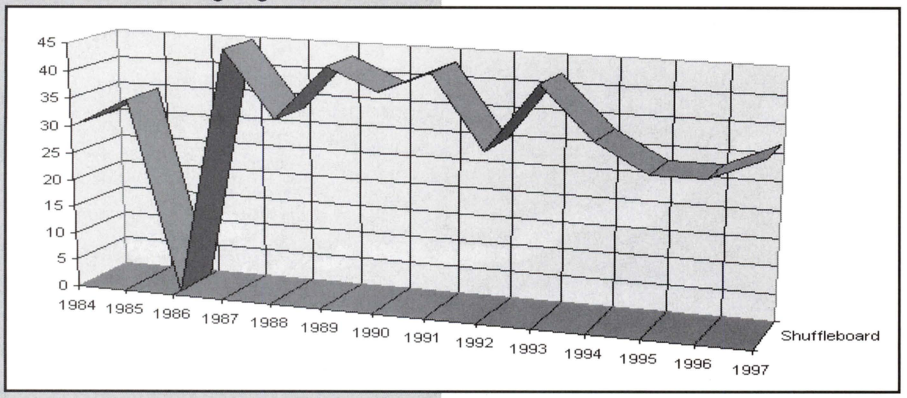
"We need equipment that is priced so operators can afford it."

"I'm sure cost is always a consideration, but we also have to look at the return on investment."

"I am cautiously optimistic about the future of the industry."

"The coin machine business is tricky, but it's enjoyable and rewarding too."

Shuffleboards



Shuffleboards

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$32	$28	$28
Average # Per Operator:	6	8	6
Total # On Location:	5,500	5,400	6,400
Total Annual Revenue:	$9 Million	$7.9 Million	$9.3 Million
Total New Purchases:	300	500	2,000

25% operate shuffleboards

- Of those who operate shuffleboards, only 11% said they made new purchases.
- When asked if FECs were good locations for shuffleboards, 100% of those responding answered no.

Kiddie Rides

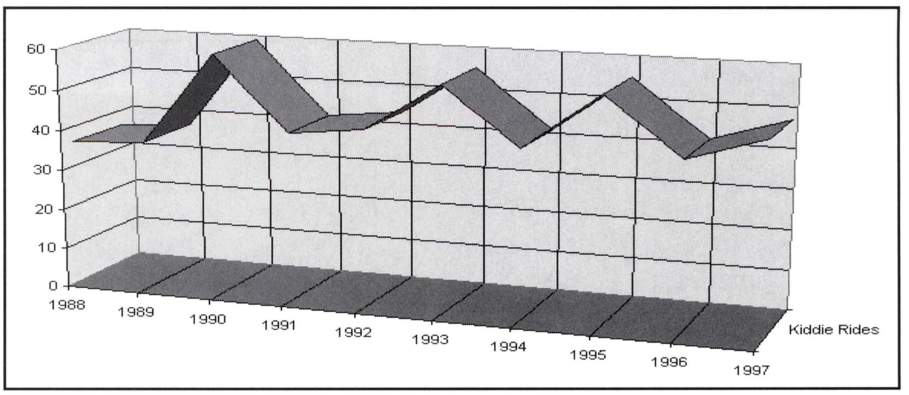
Operator comments:

"Keep your eyes on your own business."

"There are fewer kiddie locations, but they weren't the ones making the money."

"Kiddie rides are nice for little kids to do while older kids play arcade games or eat."

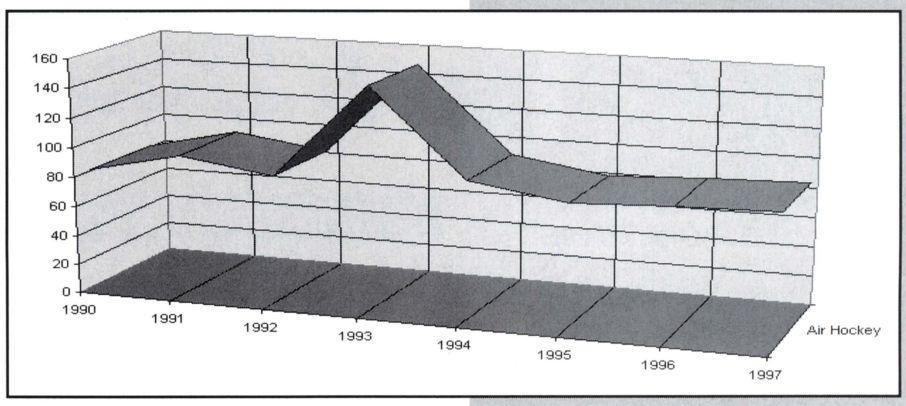
"Kiddie rides are excellent long-term equipment with good legs."



Kiddie Rides

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$48	$42	$56
Average # Per Operator:	8	11	13
Total # On Location:	10,000	15,000	19,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$25 Million	$32.7 Million	$55 Million

34% operate kiddie rides



Air Hockey

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$88	$86	$83
Average # Per Operator:	7	7	6
Total # On Location:	16,000	17,300	16,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$73.2 Million	$77.6 Million	$70 Million
Total New Purchases:	1,800	2,600	6,500

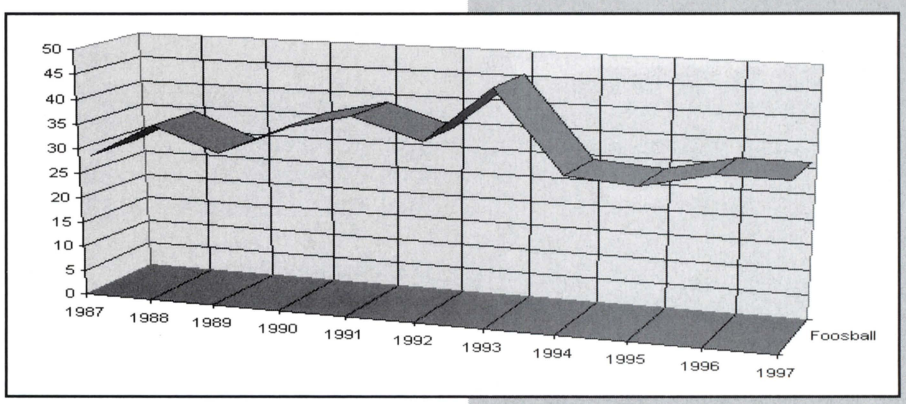
61% operate air hockey

(Of those who operate air hockey, 32% operate in street locations only and 23% operate in FECs only. The other 45% operate in a combination of locations.)

- When asked if FECs were good locations for air hockey, 90% of those repsonding said yes.

Air Hockey

Foosball



Foosball

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$32	$32	$29
Average # Per Operator:	6	8	6
Total # On Location:	11,000	16,000	12,400
Total Annual Revenue:	$19 Million	$26.6 Million	$18.7 Million
Total New Purchases:	2,000	3,200	*

48% operate foosball

- When asked if FECs are good locations for foosball, 25% of those responding said yes.

Operator comments:

"The public thinks that there is big money in my business, but there is not."

"The industry is slow and there is a low service ratio."

Cigarette & Other Vending

Operator comments:

"Smoking is legal and should be kept that way!"

"First cigarette vending machines are legal in bars; no, they're not. Now nobody seems to know why we can't get reliable information on this critical issue."

"I'm in favor of banning cigarette vending machines. I don't peddle drugs."

Cigarette Machines

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$92	$108	$97
Average # Per Operator:	38	52	35
Total # On Location:	46,000	66,000	48,000
Total Annual Revenue:	$220 Million	$373 Million	$246 Million
Total New Purchases:	500	2,000	1,000

24% operate cigarette vending machines
(Down from 32% last year.)

We asked what type of vending equipment was operated

- 12% sticker machines
- 31% gumball machines
- 13% capsule vendors
- 40% full-line vending (drink, food, snack, and coffee)

Video Gaming

Operator comments:

"It bothers me that some of my competitors are willing to skirt the law with gray area games."

"If it wasn't for my poker games, I'm afraid you wouldn't be hearing from me this year."

"I boycott all games by manufacturers that operate."

"I'm afraid that technology may obsolete a lot of our assets. It's hard to invest with a long-term expectation."

"You get what you pay for. Your return is parallel to your effort."

8-Lines

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$318	$330	$407
Average # Per Operator:	31	45	26
Total # On Location:	21,000	37,800	$37,700
Total Annual Revenue:	$347 Million	$648 Million	797 Million

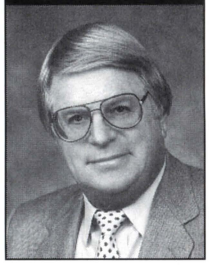
17% operate 8-Lines
(Down from 21% last year.)

Gray Area Games

	1997	1996	1995
Average Weekly Gross:	$341	$227	$264
Average # Per Operator:	26	19	34
Total # On Location:	15,000	18,000	42,800
Total Annual Revenue:	$265 Million	$212 Million	587 Million

16% operate gray area video poker
(Down from 23% last year.)

AMOA
AGENDA



DON HESCH

On the road with the ***association president***

THIS MONTH'S AMOA AGENDA MARKS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR AND THE FIRST ENTRY FROM NEWLY ELECTED ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT DON HESCH OF A.H. ENTERTAINERS IN ROLLING MEADOWS, ILL. TRADE ORGANIZATION VETERAN HESCH RECENTLY FINISHED A TERM AS PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL AUTOMATIC MERCHANDISERS ASSOCIATION AND FOLLOWS IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF HIS LATE BROTHER WAYNE HESCH AS PRESIDENT OF AMOA.

1. Bags packed
2. Travel agent on alert
3. Notes for speeches written
4. Awaiting your invitation

These are just a few of the items on my newly prepared checklist.

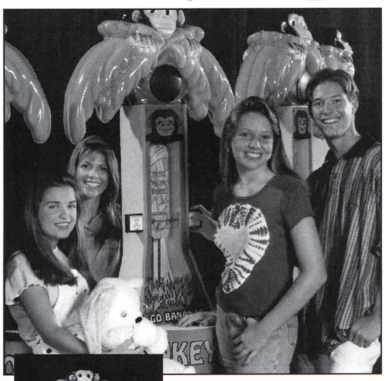
I had the honor of representing AMOA at this year's JAMMA Expo held in Tokyo. My wife Sue and Jim and Marge Stansfield also accompanied me on the trip. It was a wonderful experience, and we appreciated the personal attention paid to us by Mike Rudowicz, president of AAMA; Bob Fay, executive director of AAMA; and Ken Anderson of Sega.

Recently Sue and I also attended the West Virginia and Virginia state shows. The members of these organizations can be very proud of how professionally their state leadership organized the events. The dedication of association presidents Kenny Price and Richard Porter, respectively, has helped to strengthen the membership of these associations.

In addition to the association's presidents, there were three elements that made both of these shows a success. First, the executive directors of each association—Leoma Ballard in West Virginia and Bill Carnohan in Virginia—both of whom contributed their expertise and boundless energy. The second important factor was the exhibitors who, year after year, give their precious weekends with their families to display state-of-the-art equipment and services that are available to operators.

"I urge everyone who is not a member of their state association or AMOA to join today."

Monkey Drop™



Fast, exciting and loads of fun. Monkey Drop™ really grabs players of all ages. Players listen for the jungle drums and try to grab the biggest prize when the beat stops.

Bob's Space Racers, Inc
427 15th Street
Daytona Beach, FL 32117
PH: 904-677-0761
FAX: 904-677-0794

Bob's Space Racers

© Bob's Space Racers, Inc 1996

Last but nowhere near least are the members of each organization, who attend the shows and purchase equipment. You simply cannot have a successful state show unless you have the commitment of each of these three components.

I addressed the membership at these shows, discussing AMOA's involvement in a number of issues including video content, dollar coin, the importation of parallel boards, and tobacco vending as well as the promising future of the National Amusement Network Inc. (NANI). As I did so, it became evident to me just how important these issues were to all present.

Another important issue that was discussed was association membership itself. The key to any association is membership. Every association whether on a state or national level, needs to increase its membership base to remain healthy and successful. The larger the association, the stronger. I urge everyone who is not a member of their state association or AMOA to join today.

Sue and I cannot thank each of these state associations enough for the very warm welcome they extended to both of us. It allowed us to visit old friends and develop a new network.

In closing, I am very excited to be a part of AMOA's 50th year and am looking forward to seeing everyone in Nashville as we gather for the association's birthday celebration. ▲

COUNTDOWN TO ATEI

Buyers attending the annual Amusement Trades Exhibition International in London, England, Jan. 27-29 will be able to the view products and services of 317 exhibitors from 28 nations. For the first time in a history that dates back to the 1930s, ATEI will occupy all of Earl's Court 1 (the largest covered single-hall venue in Europe) as well as part of the adjacent Earl's Court 2.

The additional space is needed to accommodate the growth of the London Parks & Attractions Show together with the International Casino Exhibition—all under one umbrella— which makes this event one of the most comprehensive business-to-business amusement, gaming, and parks expositions.

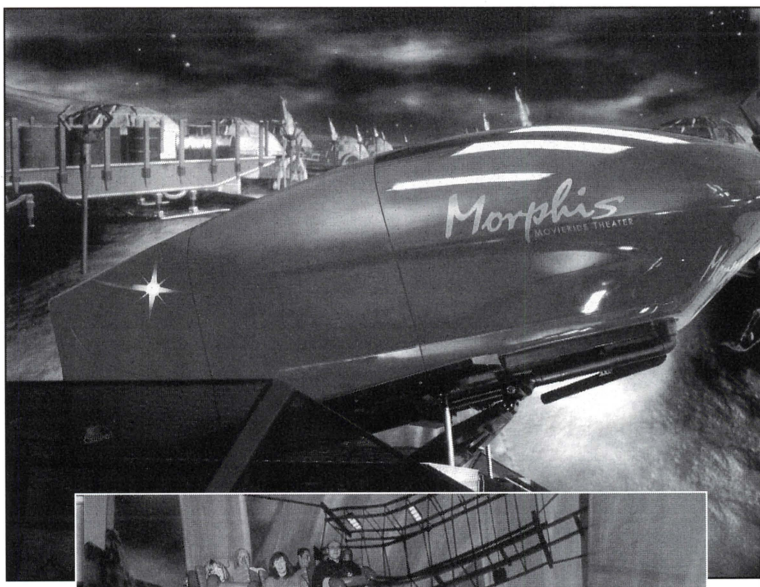
Forty-one percent of the exhibiting companies are from outside of England: USA, 23; Italy, 21; Spain 15; Germany, 13; Belgium and the Netherlands (seven each); France, six; Austria, five; and Australia and Canada, four. Other exhibitors are from Argentina, Bulgaria, China, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Monaco, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, and the Ukraine.

The single biggest stand (booth) at ATEI will be that of Deith Leisure. Other substantial space will be occupied by Cromptons Leisure Machines, Electrocoin Automatics, and JPM International.

This year, ATEI embarked on an aggressive international marketing campaign that included advertising in 35 leading trade journals. Early ticket applications have come from buyers in 65 countries; expectations are that 100 countries will be represented when he show opens.

CAMBER UK DEBUTS MORPHIS MOVIERIDE

Camber Entertainment, the recently formed United Kingdom-based division of the Huntsville, Ala., Camber Corp., showed its new 14- to 20-seat capsule simulator, Morphis MovieRide, at the recent IAAPA in Orlando, Fla. Morphis was designed over a 10-month period and reflects



TOP: The first Morphis MovieRide Theater is open on Walton Pier in Walton-on-the-Naze.

BOTTOM: The first StarGazer is at the entrance to the Skyview in the south terminal of Gatwick Airport.

both the higher expectations of today audiences, as well as current state-of-the-art technology in motion hardware, motion control, and audio visual systems.

High levels of ergonomic design were applied to ensure both the comfort and safety of the passengers. The audio visual source is solid-state digital technology that replaces laser and video disc systems. The simulator is controlled via a new suite of electronics and software designed by Maris Simulation Controls Ltd.

In addition, Camber is the exclusive distributor of StarGazer, a new seven-seat pod mounted on a six-axis hydraulic motion base that can be configured into a motion theater environment. StarGazer features high standards of passenger comfort and has a number of unique features including fully programmable wind and aroma simulation.

Camber's ride film library contains around 50 titles, all available in high-resolution, broadcast-standard video, and many in high-definition TV format. Camber Entertainment is in Sussex, +44 (0)1293 427921; fax +44 (0)1293 427925.

EVERY DAY CAN BE CHRISTMAS

Modern Products, a United Kingdom manufacturer and marketer of amusement rides, has produced a 150m Track Ride for Santapark at Rovaniemi, the capital of Finnish Lapland (the official home of Santa Claus). The ride, which features themed sleigh cars, runs through a wonderland of the four seasons before moving on to Santa's Workshop.

Peter Rooke, managing director of Modern Products, commented, "The Track Ride is one of the pieces of equipment we are making for Santapark; it will be a major attraction in this innovative theme park development."

Modern Products is in West Butterwick, Scunthorpe, +44 (0)1724 783157; fax +44 (0)1724 782120.

NAMOA Ltd. board

The National Amusement Machine Operators Association Ltd. recently elected officers at the AMOA Queensland Expo '97 in Australia. Back row, (l-r): Ray Lastelle, Max Griffiths, Terry Williams, Jonathan Wells, Charles Ver Linden, and Allan Perry; front row, (l-r): Bruce Newton, Imelda McLean, Frank Sebastyan (chairman), George Campbell, Ken Corley, and Paul Modica.

INTERNATIONAL CALENDAR

January 22-25
Interschau '98, Nurnberg, Germany. Fax Concord Expo Group (508)371-7121, or call +49-911-86060; fax +49-911-860228.

January 27-29
ATEI '98, Earls Court 1, London, England. Call +44-171- 713-0302; fax +44-171-713-0446.

March 11-12
India Amusement Expo. Taj Palace Hotel, New Delhi. Call W.T. Glasgow Inc., (703)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

March 12-15
ENADA Spring Show, Rimini, Italy. Call 39-541-71-1711; fax 39-541-78-6686.

June 16-21
Expo-=Diversiones '98, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. Call (3)614-3015; fax (3)615-1483.

July 27-30
China Amusement Expo, Beijing, PRC. Call (852) 2865-2633; fax (852) 2866-1770.

August 5-6
EXIME, World Trade Center, Mexico City, Mexico. Call W.T. Glasgow Inc., (708)333-9292; fax (708)333-4086.

IMA LOOKING TOWARD '98 SHOW

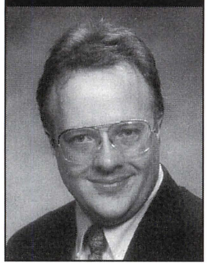
IMA, the German entertainment industry trade event, is gearing up for its largest fair with early bookings for the Nov. 18-23 dates, a break from previous winter dates in January.

Petra Lassahn, project manager of IMA at Dusseldorf fair organizers Miller Freeman, said, "The reaction to the new IMA dates is simply fantastic. We were indeed convinced that holding the fair in November would be a great improvement, but we could not have foreseen such an endorsement of the concept as shown by the orders we have already received. I am sure we will have quite an exceptional fair."

Notable on the list of exhibitors are Gauselmann, Bally Wulff, NSM, NOVA, and the Sega subsidiary Premier Loisir. Miller Freeman advised that the general trend in IMA bookings is for larger stands than before. Fair sponsor VDAJ (German Industry Association for coin-op Amusement and Vending Machines) sees the development as evidence of loyalty to IMA as a European meeting point and confidence in the future of the coin-op industry. ▲

VIC FORTENBACH

TICKET TECH



REDEMPTION GAME REPAIR:

what tools do you really need?

Redemption game repair is not unlike video or pinball repair with this one exception: repairing a redemption game can be accomplished with a minimal number of tools. You don't need an oscilloscope, a pinball dolly cart, or other exotic test fixtures. Basically, the single tool you need is common sense. You need the ability to trace a problem from the beginning to the end, and fixing it somewhere in the middle. Once you have the common sense figured out, you will still need some hardware tools.

One rule is to carry the least number of tools to the game. Doing this will speed the repairs so the game can be up and running quickly. Going to every game with a construction tool belt with every possible tool is going a bit far. But if you want to put on a show with your tools, go ahead. It sure looks great to the boss, but it's just frosting on the cake. If you spend too much time putting on a tool show and not repairing the games, the show will soon end. The basic redemption game repair can be accomplished with five tools. If you're familiar with the games and their inherent problems, you might get away with even fewer.

Since the repair or tech room in a family entertainment center is only a few steps away from every game in the location, getting another tool is not a problem. But it does waste time. So whenever you repair a game, carry all five tools. You can put the tools in your back pocket. But when you carry a screwdriver there be sure to put it with the blade downward inside your pocket. If you have the blade sticking out, someone could be injured if they were standing behind you when you raised up from a squatting position.

Carrying a multiple tipped screwdriver is handy. It's two or more screwdrivers in one, plus it's less tools to carry. The basic version is a slotted driver on one end and a #2 Phillips driver on the other. Some of the more exotic screwdrivers have several tips stored inside the handle. These tips could include some torx tips besides the basic screwdriver tips. One model of screwdriver I have has a reversible ratchet so turning a screw in a tight place is easier.

The digital multimeter is a standard tool for any game repair. For redemption games any digital meter from Radio Shack will work. Some of the fancier meters Radio Shack stocks even speak, so you don't have to look at the display. One thing to keep in mind if you purchase and use a Radio Shack meter: get extra leads and probes. The ones that come with the meter tend to be lesser quality and will fail at the worse possible moment. If you are a die-hard redemption game repair technician, the Radio Shack meters will not live up to your expectations. Get a Fluke or Beckman digital meter. While these meters cost anywhere from two to 10 times more than a Radio Shack meter, it's worth it. I have a Beckman digital meter that is going on 15 years old. Beside the normal calibration service, the meter is perfect.

Slip joint pliers are the third tool required for redemption game repair. A socket set is preferable, but slip joint pliers work in a pinch. Pliers or a socket set from any place other than a reputable tool source like Jenson Tools, Techni Tools or Sears (Craftsman) are a waste of money. Thinking you will save money buying a cheap tool is a mistake. The cheap tool may fail when you least expect it and worse yet it could break and injure you or someone else. Cutting pliers, dikes, or lineman pliers as they are sometimes called, are also a required tool to have in hand. A good quality pliers will save time and aggravation in the long run.

"Thinking you will save money buying a cheap tool is a mistake."

The last important tool you will need for redemption game repair is an Allen wrench set. You can purchase a set in a plastic pouch with each wrench separate or get them in an all-in-one folding style. This folding style is what I prefer because I can't lose any of the wrenches. With more and more redemption games being manufactured overseas, both a standard and a metric set of Allen wrenches may be required. Having the right tool for the job makes your job easier.

If you have any comments, I can be reached at Vicco Electronics, (760)322-4000 or at my Web site (http://members.aol.com/ticketvic). ▲

TIME FLIES

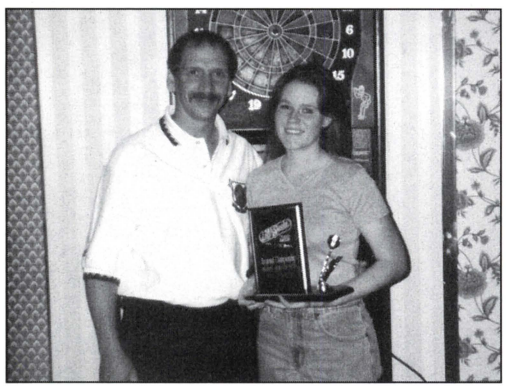
Top photo: What could Marty Glazman (c) look so shocked about? Only Oscar Robins (l) and Dean McMurdie have the answer in this photo that must date back 15 years.

Below: Tom Siemieniec was with the now defunct Centuri when this photo was taken. Clues to the age of the photo include the game, *The Pit*, and in Tom's hand a very, very old Play Meter advertising rate card.

Middle photo: Betty and Dock Ringo (who was president of AMOA in 1984) with their children Amy and Bryan around that time.

Bottom photo: Dick George could not stop laughing when he saw this hilariously funny framed photo presented by Jim Hayes (c) and Bill Levine (r) as Dick stepped down as president of the Ohio operators association.

BullShooter Tour stops in Iowa, West Virginia



Arachnid's BullShooter Tour made recent stops in the mountain state of West Virginia—a first in tour history—and Iowa, drawing players from a number of other states to compete for prize money and a spot in the BullShooter Finals in May.

Cleveland Coin Machine Exchange co-sponsored the event held in Huntington, W.Va., which also saw then-AMOA president Jerry Derrick and National Dart Association Board member Kenny Price in attendance.

Moss Distributing of Des Moines, Iowa, co-sponsored the $8,000 qualifier held in Waterloo. Each 10-event tournament offered cash and prizes, as well as qualifying certificates to the finals to all first, second, and third place winners.

The BullShooter XIII World Challenge of Champions will be held over Memorial Day weekend at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Chicago, Ill. Over $100,000 will be awarded to winners during the four-day challenge. Here's a look at the final results from West Virginia and Iowa:

WEST VIRGINIA

Women's Doubles: 1st—Laurie Webb of Louisville, Ky., and Carol Schaeffner of Cincinnati, Ohio; 2nd—Delynn Mills of Middletown, Ohio, and Teresa James of W. Carrolton, Ohio; 3rd—Colleen Giles of Columbus, Ohio, and Keya Deem of Industry, Pa.

Men's Doubles: Steve Sears of Elyria, Ohio, and Darryl Lubinski of N. Ridgeville, Ohio; 2nd—Greg Goodwin and Chester Ramsey, both of Louisville, Ky.; 3rd—Dave Kaufman and Gary Bohatch, both of Pittsburgh, Pa.

Pro Doubles: 1st—Jason Jarvis of Dayton, Ohio, and Scott Buckley of Cincinnati, Ohio; 2nd—Bill Cancilla and Don Wirth, both of Pittsburgh, Pa.; 3rd—Bob Marshman of Washington, Pa., and Howard Grimm of Weirton.

Mixed Triples: 1st—Carol Schaeffner and Scott Buckley, both of Cincinnati, Ohio, and Jason Jarvis of Dayton, Ohio; 2nd—Laurie Webb, Mike Brumieve, and Lee O'Connell, all of Louisville, Ky.; 3rd—Donna Pennington of Proctoville, Ohio, and Jim Mynes of Hurricane and Wayne Hanlin of Huntington.

Cricket Doubles: 1st— Steve Sears of Elyria, Ohio, and Darryl Lubinsky of N. Ridgeville, Ohio; 2nd—Rob Yurga and Eric Kowalczyk, both of Apollo, Pa.; 3rd—Richard Loughary of Madisonville, Ky., and William Edwards of Hopkinsville, Ky.

Pro Cricket: 1st—Scott Buckley of Cincinnati, Ohio; 2nd—Howard Grimm of Weirton; 3rd—Jim Mynes of Hurricane.

Women's Singles: 1st—Keya Deem of Industry, Pa.; 2nd—Colleen Giles of Columbus, Ohio; 3rd—Delynn Mills of Middletown, Ohio.

Men's Singles: 1st—Mitch Ma-

FROM TOP:
Men's Doubles winners Steve Sears (l) and Darryl Lubinski with Arachnid's Elona Bridge in West Virginia.

Women's Singles champion Keya Deem with Arachnid's Warren Morgan in West Virginia.

Pro Doubles winners Ray Terronez (l) and Manny Jimenez (r) with Arachnid's Anne Bressler and Dawn Phillips in Iowa.

Men's Doubles champions Karl Meisel (l) and Mike Mecham (r) with Arachnid's Brad Boe at the qualifier in Iowa.

honey of Glen Burnie, Md.; 2nd—Jim Mynes of Hurricane; 3rd—Steve Sears of Elyria, Ohio.

Pro Singles: 1st—Howard Grimm of Weirton; 2nd—Dave Lewis of Miamisburg, Ohio; 3rd—Frank Ebert of Stroudsburg, Ohio.

Mixed Doubles Cricket: 1st—Jim Mynes of Hurricane and Cynthia Machmer of Milton; 2nd—Delynn Mills of Middletown, Ohio, and Fred Center of Dayton, Ohio; 3rd—Larry Porter and Diane Bledsoe, both of Grayson, Ohio.

IOWA

Women's Doubles: 1st—Andrea Crawford and Moe Stricker, both of Waterloo; 2nd—Wndey Wermerskerchen and Deb Steffeny, both of Cedar Rapids; 3rd—Lori Williams of Clinton and Michelle Hastings of Dubuque.

Men's Doubles: 1st—Karl Meisel of W. Des Moines and Mike Mecham of Avon Lake; 2nd—Terry Becker of Dunkerton and Scott Thompson of Waterloo; 3rd—Don Harris of Marion and John Williams of Clinton.

Pro Doubles: 1st—Ray Terronez of E. Moline, Ill., and Manuel Jimenez of Davenport;; 2nd—Rich Lueders of Cedar Rapids and Curt Thompson of Coresville; 3rd—Dennis Sturgis and Charlie Sturgis, both of Plattsburg, Mo.

Mixed Triples: 1st—Jerry Starman and Jeff Renze, both of Carroll, and Andrea Crawford of Waterloo; 2nd—Dennis Sturgis, Charlie Sturgis, and Barbara Sturgis, all of Plattsburg, Mo.; 3rd—Ray Terronez of E. Moline, Ill.; Manuel Jimenez of Rock Island, Ill.; and Kim Bawulski of Palatin, Ill.

Cricket Doubles: 1st—Mike Mechan of Avon Lake and Karl Meisel of W. Des Moines; 2nd—Burce Legrand and Craig Smothers, both of Dubuque; 3rd—Jeff Renze and Jerry Starman, both of Carroll.

Pro Cricket: 1st—Manuel Jimenez of Davenport; 2nd-Dennis Sturgis of Plattsburg, Mo.; 3rd—Rich Lueders of Cedar Rapids.

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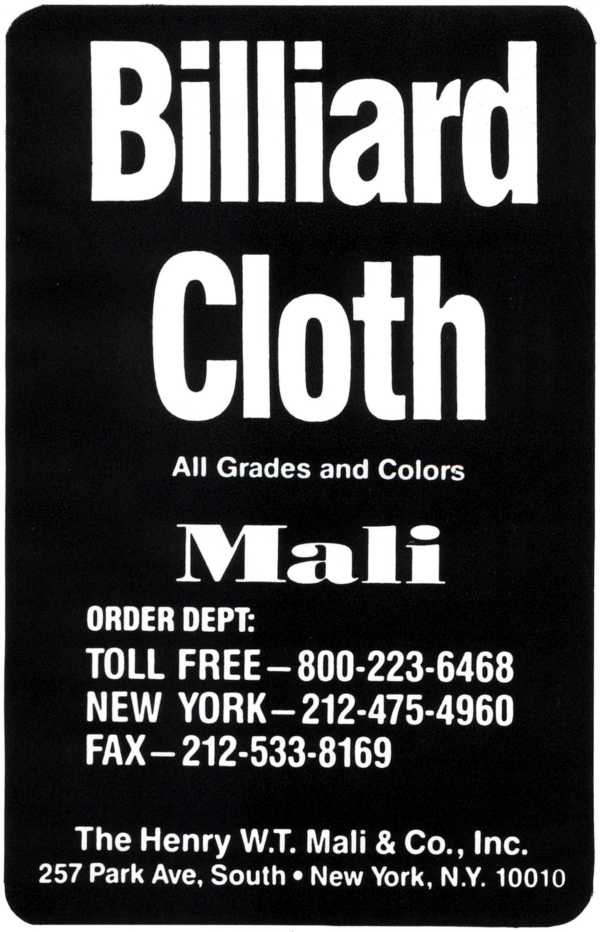

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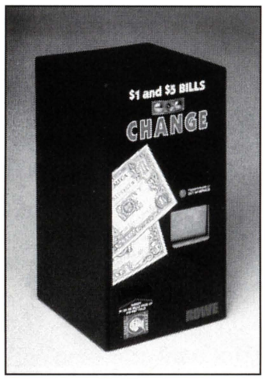
NCBC-2 SMALL BILL CHANGER

Rowe presents its new NSBC-2 small bill changer boasting a low coin level sensor and easy access to the company's UBA-2 bill acceptor inside the unit. It comes with a high security door guard and optional mounting base.



Features include a single hopper with non-contact coin level sensing, automatic capacity setting, token capability, plug-in programmable electronic chip control, heavy-duty 14 gauge steel cabinet with two-point locking system, and modular electronic components.

The unit can hold up to 2,000 quarters, 500 bills, and weighs 70 lbs. Dimensions are 11.5" wide x 12" deep x 21" high. With base, the unit stands 53.5" high. Optional security features include 11-gauge high security door guard kit, locking bill box, and lock cylinder.

For more information, contact Rowe, 1500 Union Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49507; (616)243-3633; fax (616)243-9414.

CUSTOM CABINETS

Cabtec announces its line of custom designed cabinets built for a wide variety of applications or environments. The company uses CNC-type equipment that will produce cabinets with accurate and repeatable dimensions. There is never a need to relocate game components or modify hole sizes or shapes.

Cabinet components are located with dowel pins and held in place with steel brackets to facilitate assembly. The accurate dimensions allow the cabinets to be shipped in a disassembled state, thus reducing shipping costs. Cabinet assembly is further simplified by the inclusion of written instructions.

A variety of cabinets have been designed for video games that employ 13", 19", 25", and 27" monitors. In addition, the company can manufacture specialized cabinets that accommodate three player interfaces or projection screens.

For more information, contact Cabtec, 825 W. Main St., Hortonville, WI 54944; (920)873-5313 or (888)873-5313; fax (920)779-4095; e-mail (jenjon@athenet.net).

FLIP FLOP PLUSH

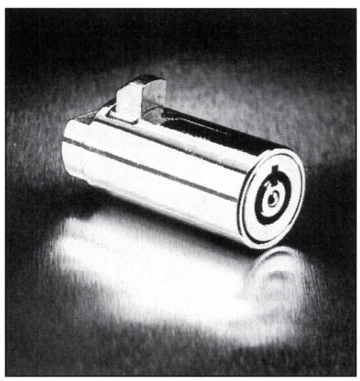
King Plush introduces its Flip Flop plush that will make customers do a double take when they redeem tickets for these two-in-one attractions that feature two animal fronts sewn back to back displaying two separate characters.

At 12" long, these new Flip Flop characters work well both in a jumbo crane or redemption counter. Currently, there are five styles with a total of 10 animals: gray fox with pink pig, white kitten with gray mouse, brown fox with yellow chicken, white bunny with gray bear, and multicolored turtle with fish.

For more information, contact King Plush, P.O. Box 4428, Carson, CA 90749; (310)834-0499 or (800)473-3402; fax (310)834-7905; Web site (http://www.kingplush.com).

10-PIN TUMBLER CYLINDER

Chicago Lock, exclusive distributor of Camlock Systems Products in North America, now stocks the new T Series Cylinder Lock for virtually all vending machines equipped with standard T Handle locking devices. This new cylinder features a 10-pin tumbler locking mechanism, sintered steel locking bolt, and an anti-drill center.



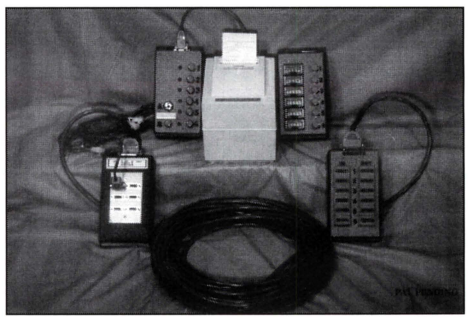
The construction creates over five million unique registered key combinations. Steel locking bolts protect against pulling and other physical attacks, and the anti-drill center adds to the physical integrity of the lock.

Key control is enhanced by the requirement for special factory controlled key blanks and special key cutting equipment. The T Series is available in a variety of cam lock configurations for vending and amusement applications.

For more information, contact Chicago Lock, 10100 88th Ave., P.O. Box 0069, Pleasant Prarie, WI 53158; (414)947-7177 or (800)445-3204; fax (414)947-7178.

V3 STEPSAVER

Lektron Inc. unveils its new V3 and V6 Stepsavers, which can accommodate three and six games respectively. The Stepsavers are designed to improve efficiency by removing and transferring credits to a metered credit control or optional printer control and accounting system.



Most connections simply plug together; pliers and screwdrivers are the only tools needed. The unit is powered by its host game(s) so no batteries or electrical outlet is needed, except for a printer.

Features include five digit resetable counters and six digit non-resetable counters on the accounting system. The Stepsavers work on almost any game with 12v DC counters. Programming software for the printer system is included.

For more information, contact Lektron Inc., P.O. Box 928, Terre Haute, IN 47808; (888)335-8894; fax (812)234-6251; e-mail (lektron_inc@mail.abcs.com); Web site (http://www.abcs.com/lektron_inc). ▲

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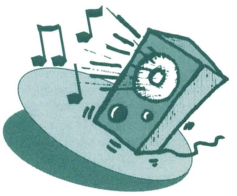

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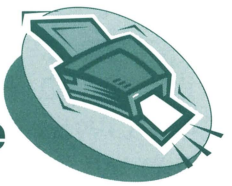

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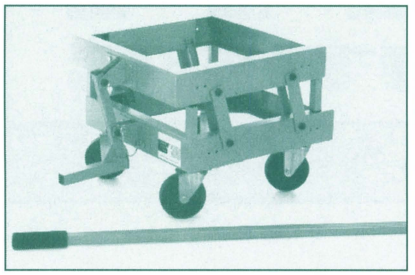

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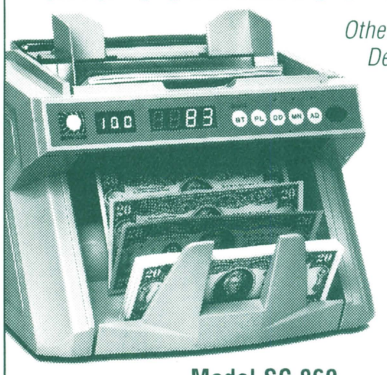

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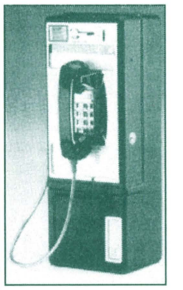

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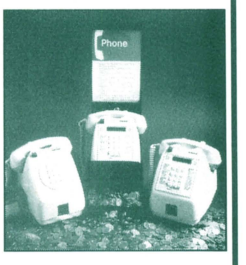

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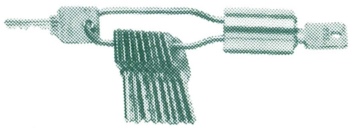

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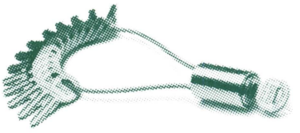

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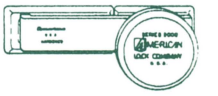

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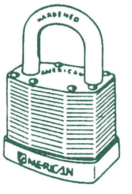

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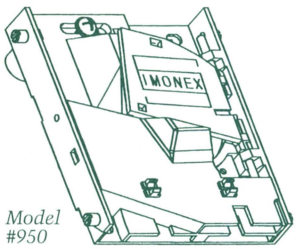

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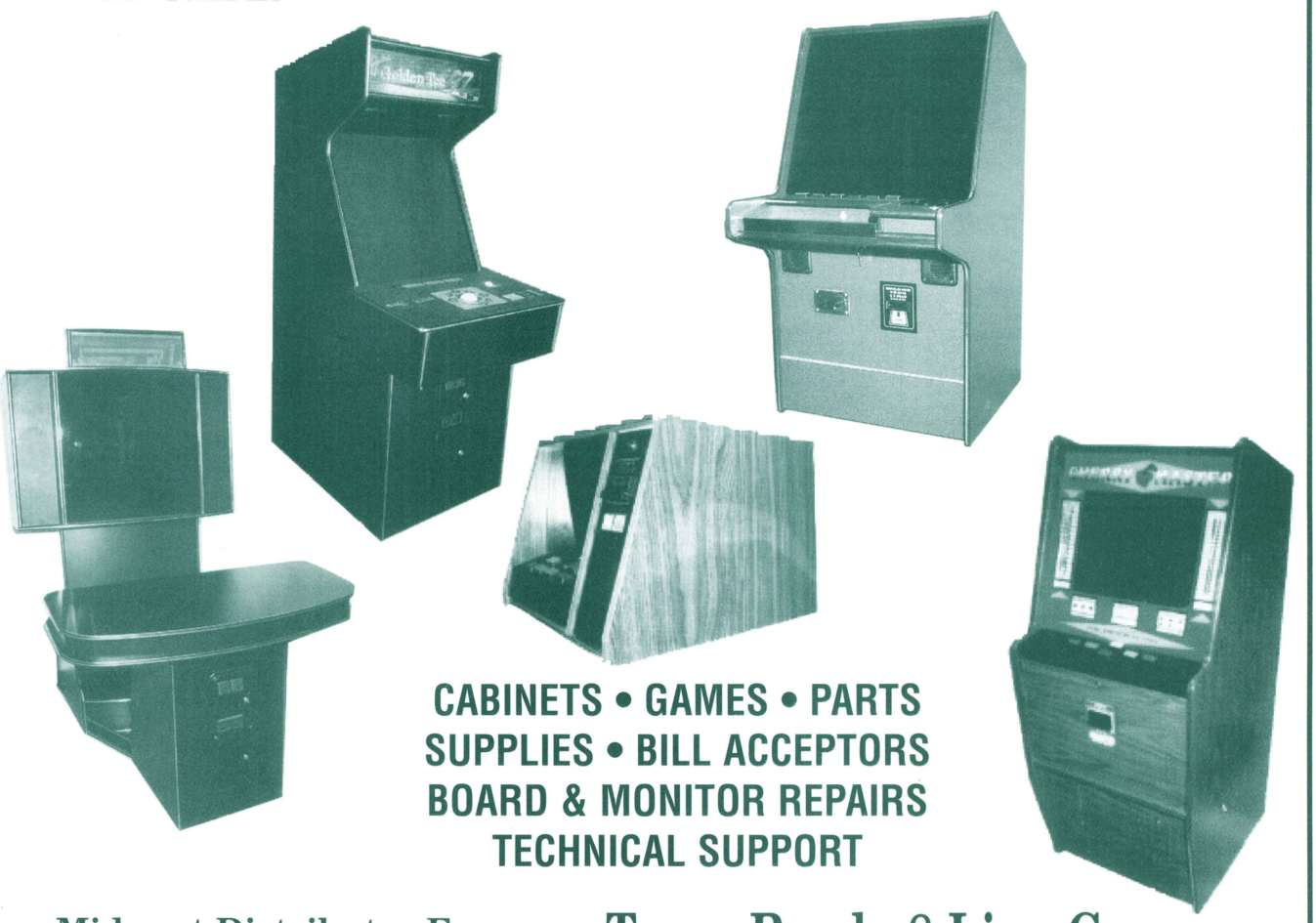

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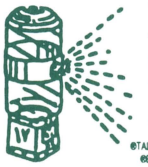

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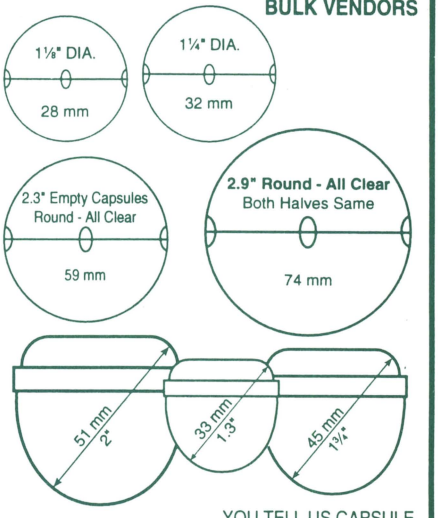

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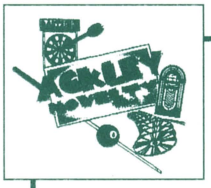

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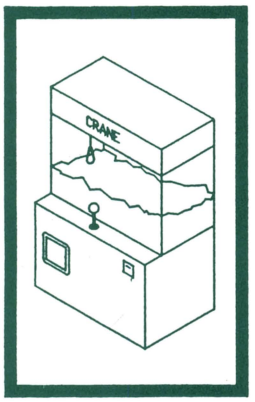

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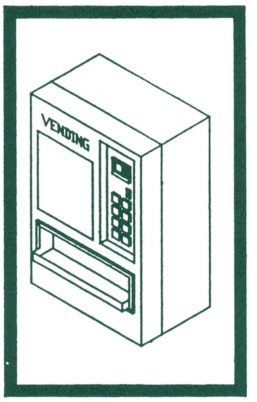

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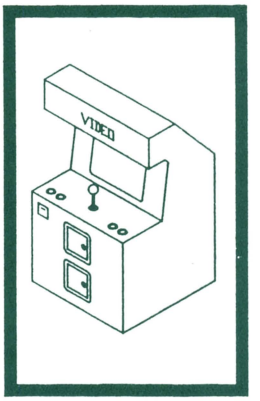

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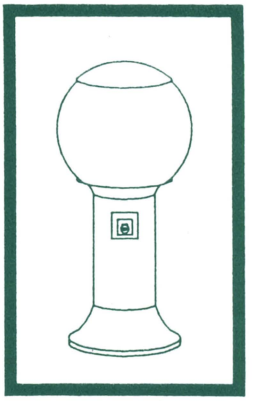

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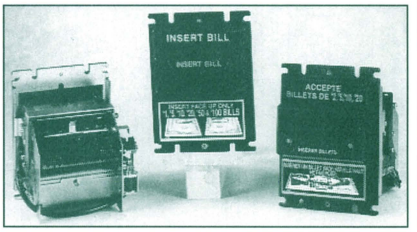

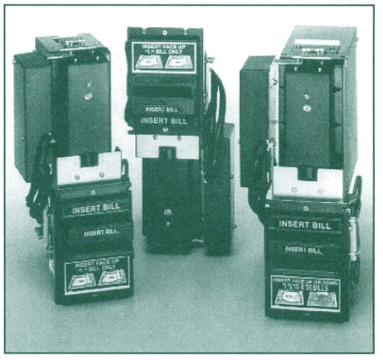

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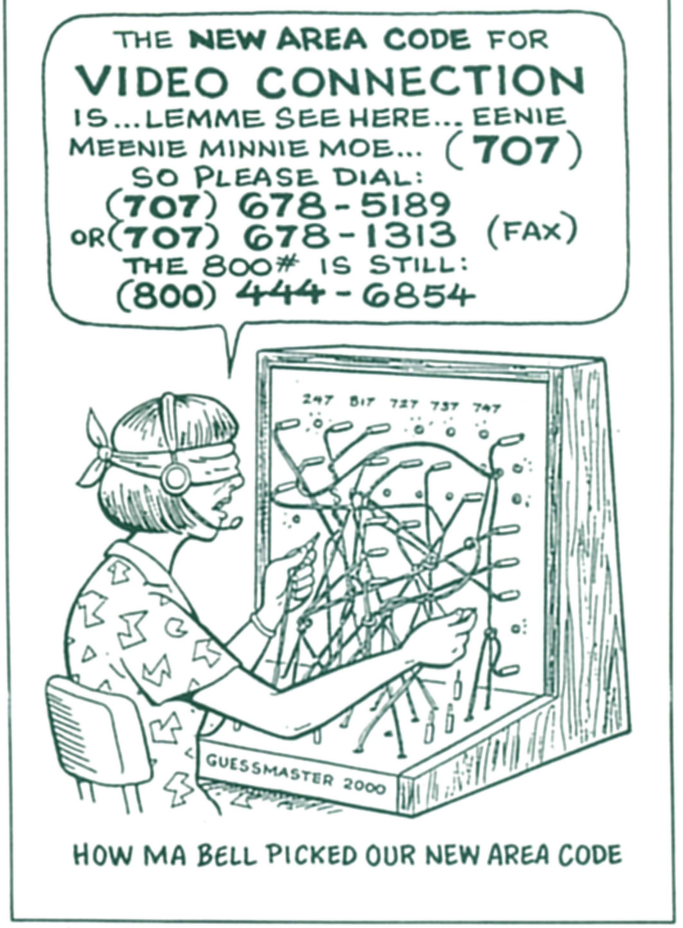
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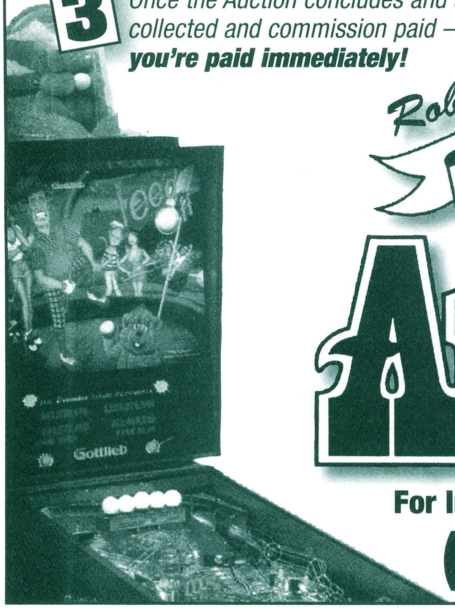

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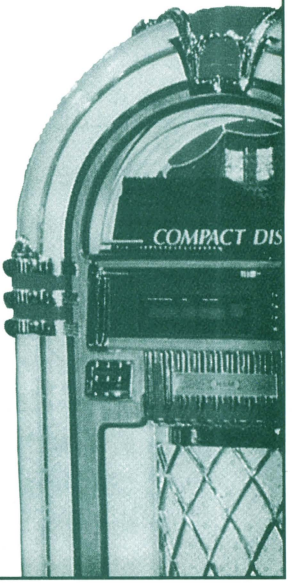

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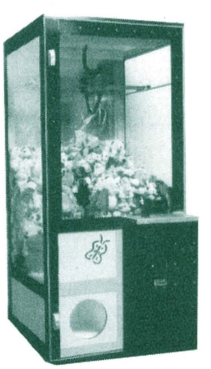

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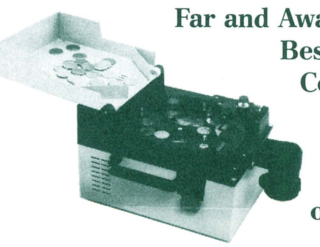

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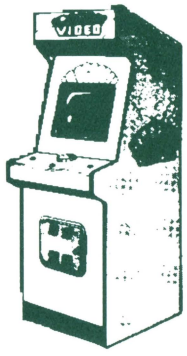

February

7th	21st	28th
Des Moines, IA	**Tampa, FL**	**Kansas City, KS**
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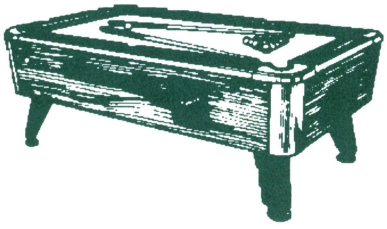

March

7th	21st	28th
Indianapolis, IN	**Pennsauken, NJ**	**Louisville, KY**
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- Removal of all equipment by midnight day of sale.
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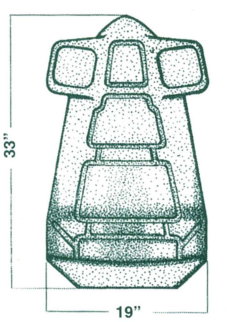
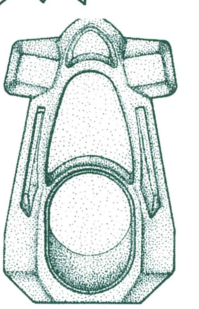
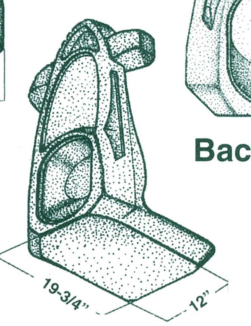


Front View



Back View



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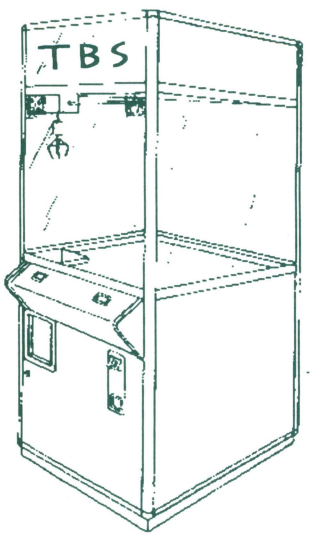

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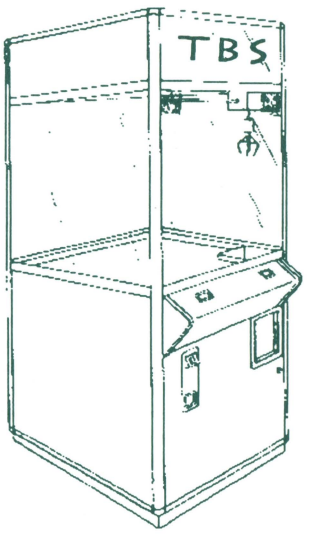

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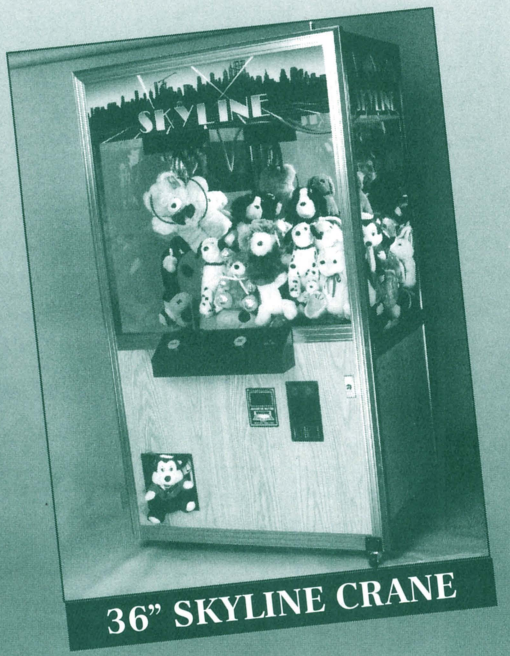

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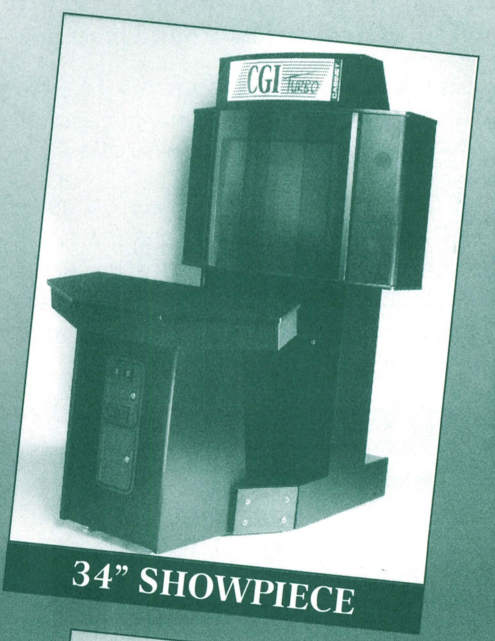

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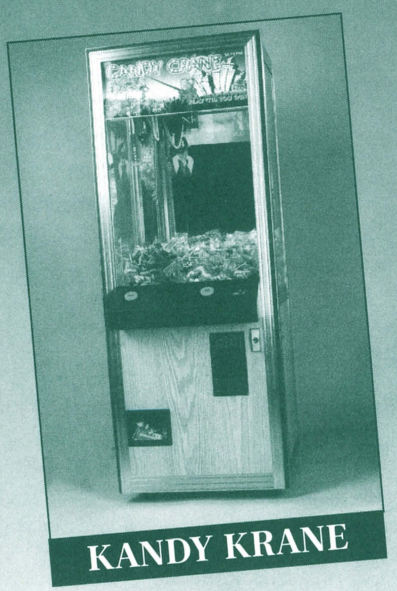

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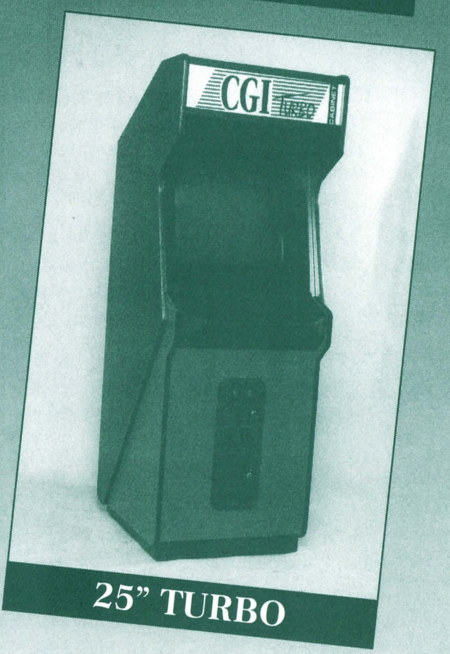

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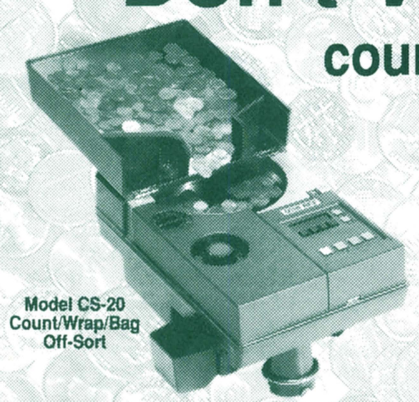
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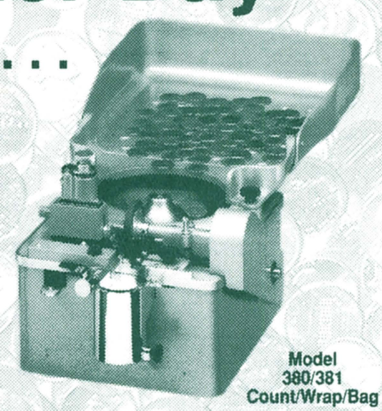
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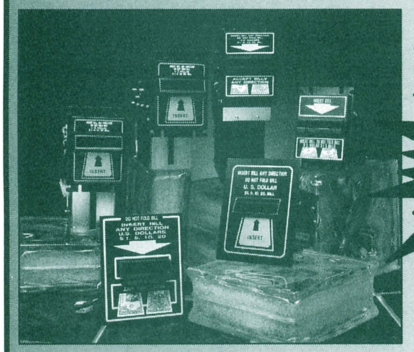

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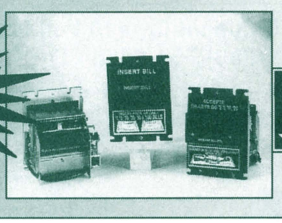

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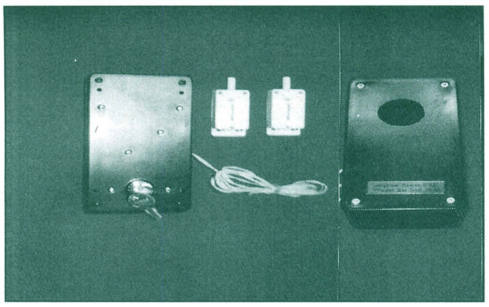

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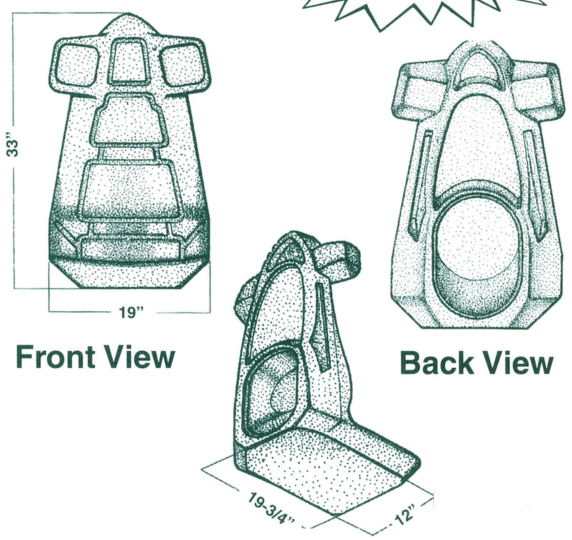

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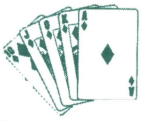

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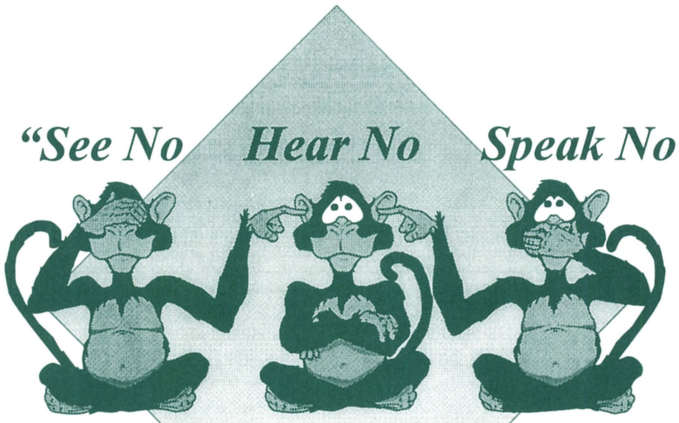

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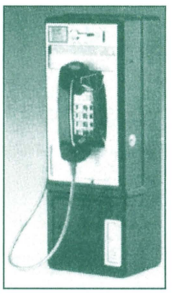

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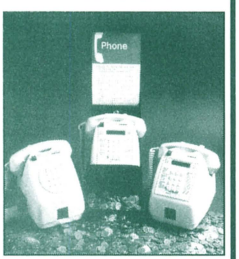

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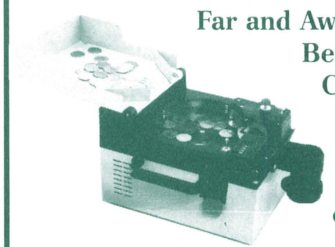

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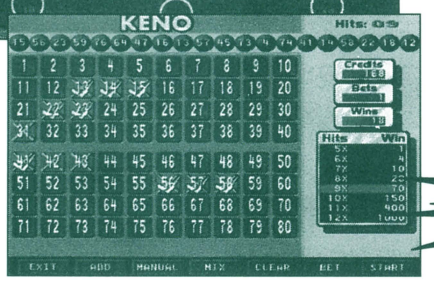

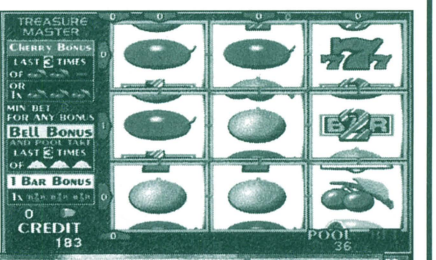

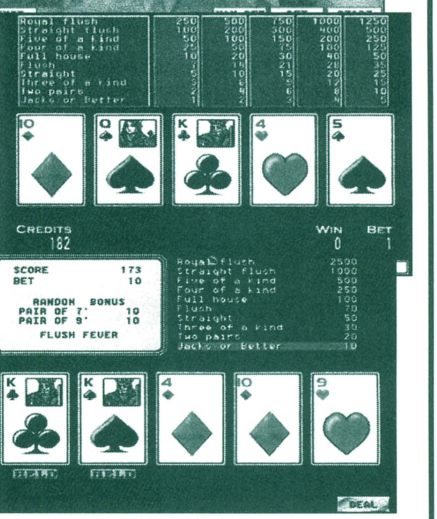

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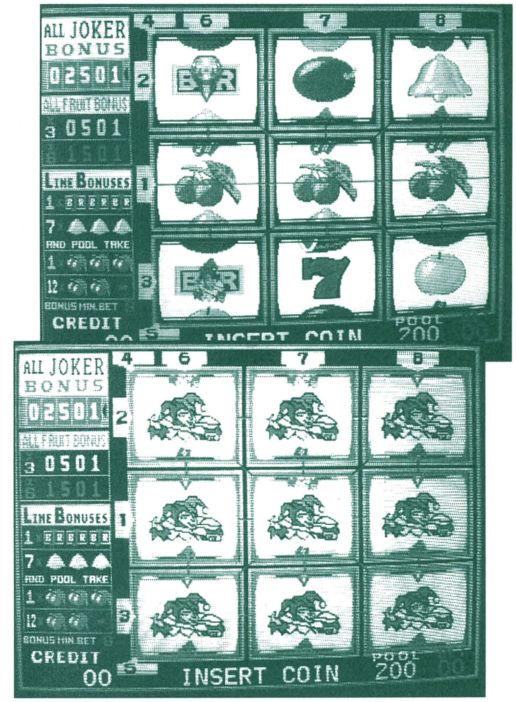

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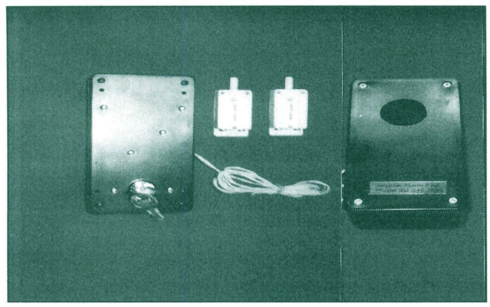

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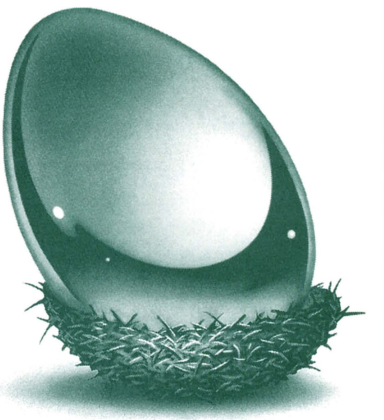

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